嘘喰い

29

迫稔雄

WHAT YOU'RE AFTER IS...

OOFUNA-SAN...

O...

OOFUNA?

CHAPTER 307

THE TRAP OF EYE ESTIMATION

CHAPTER 307

THE TRAP OF EYE ESTIMATION

COULD IT BE...

A1!! × TOP LEFT!

INDEED, THAT CELL WAS A MISS, BUT IT'S ALSO...

YES...

YOU DID WELL NOTICING SUCH A PLACE, OOFUNA.

THE CELL THAT MADE LACY THE MOST PANICKED AT THAT TIME.

WHEN YOU FIRST TRIED TO PRESS THAT CELL,

MISS

MISS

MISS

MISS

MISS!

NO WAY...
NO WAY NO
WAY NO WA
NO WAY NO
AY NO W

...S.

IF... IF THIS KEEPS GOING AND HE REALLY HITS...

HE FACED SUCH A PINCH IN THE EARLY GAME, WHEN THE RADAR WAS NOT EVEN READY.

LACY WAS SHIVERING IN FEAR AT THAT TIME.

THERE IS A SHIP IN THAT CELL !?

"WHY DOES HE KNOW THAT

"IN THIS SITUATION, IF OOFUNA KEEPS SINKING THE SHIPS, THIS GAME WILL BE OVER IN A BLINK OF AN EYE..." AND,

THE 2 SHIPS ON THE EDGE, WHERE PEOPLE GENERALLY HESITATE TO PLAY ON, WERE PINPOINTED AND SUNK.

"HE IS DOING SOMETHING... HE KNOWS THE POSITIONS OF MY SHIPS..."

MOREOVER, OOFUNA WAS TRYING TO ATTACK ONE CELL ABOVE THE SHIP... SUCH AN UNNATURAL WAY OF PLAYING... AND THEN LACY THOUGHT:

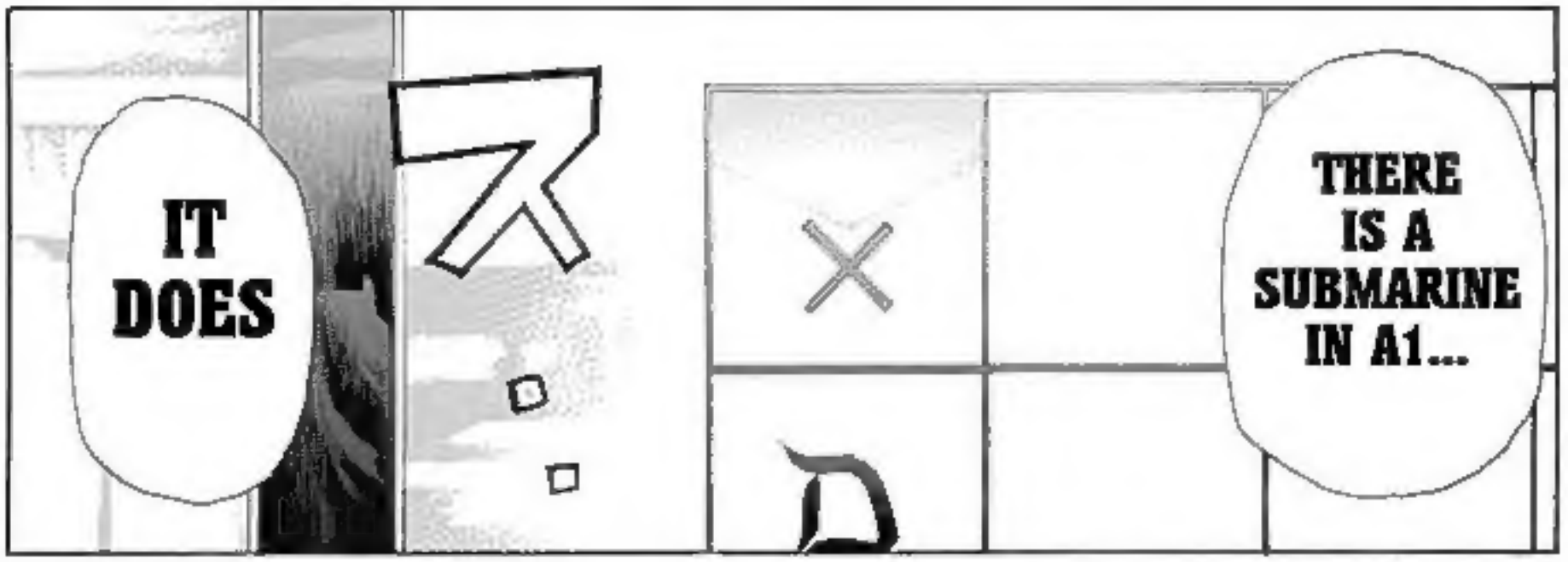
HIT

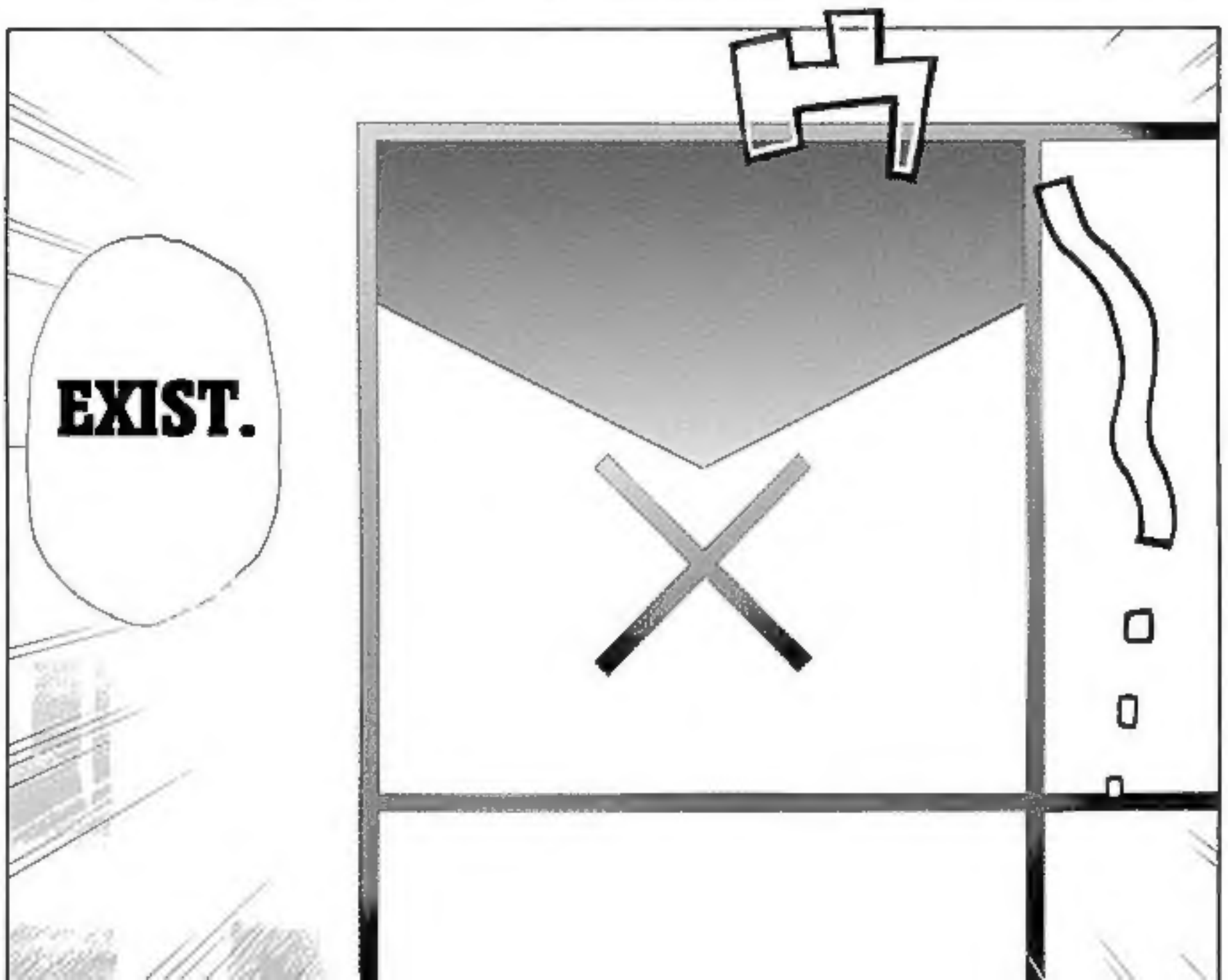
A SUB-
MARINE
HAS
BEEN
SUNK

.....
WHAT IS HAPPENING ...?
IT HIT...

WHY?
ONE OF THOSE SUBMARINES HAVE ALREADY BEEN HIT... NO, IT WAS MORE LIKE...
IT SAID THE "LAST ONE" EVEN THOUGH THERE ARE TWO SUBMARINES LEFT...
SAID "WHETHER YOU CAN HIT THE LAST ONE OR NOT, IT DE-" BEFORE BEING CUT OFF.
THE VOICE ON THE INTERCOM

SO HE SAID "THE LAST ONE", THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT...
HE HAD ALREADY TOLD ME THE POSITION OF ONE OF THE SUBMARINES.


IT DOES
THERE IS A SUBMARINE IN A1...


EXIST.

LOOK CLOSELY AT THE "X" ON THE PANEL... IF THAT SYMBOL IS THE POSITION THAT OOFUNA-SAN "TOUCHED"...

YOKOI-SAN,

WE MIGHT HAVE MADE AN ENORMOUS MISTAKE FROM THE BEGINNING.

AFTER MISSING THE FIRST TIME!?

WHY DID IT HIT

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN!?

IT MIGHT BE THAT IN THIS GAME,

AND NOW, THE PLACE HE PRESSED WAS MORE IN THE CENTER OF THE CELL, AND THUS ON THE SHIP.

THE POSITION OOFUNA-SAN PRESSED THE FIRST TIME DID NOT HIT THE SHIP.

THIS MIGHT BE JUST A PETTY TRICK ONCE IT'S FIGURED OUT, BUT FOR A NORMAL PERSON LIKE ME, THERE'S NO WAY I COULD THINK OF IT.

YOU ARE GREAT... YOU GOT ME GOOD.

I NEVER DOUBTED ANYTHING. YOU CREATED A BLIND SPOT IN ME PERFECTLY, AND MADE ME ACCEPT IT WITHOUT ME EVER FINDING ANYTHING STRANGE.

LACY,

IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO PRESS THE CELL WHERE THE SHIP IS,

BUT, IT MIGHT BE A SYSTEM WHERE YOU HAVE TO TOUCH THE SHIP ITSELF DIRECTLY IN ORDER TO GET A HIT?

I THOUGHT ABOUT IT.

WHEN YOU WERE TOUCHING THE PANEL, YOU HAD ALWAYS BEEN

ON THE OTHER HAND, YOU HAVE BEEN PRECISELY HITTING THE MIDDLE OF ALL OF YOURS.

LOOKING CLOSELY, THERE ARE MANY INSTANCES OF MY X BEING SLIGHTLY OFFSET FROM THE CENTER,

IT WAS IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO HIT THE SHIP'S BOW, WHEREVER IT WAS POINTING TO, BY HITTING ON THE CENTER.

QUITE CAREFUL.

YOUR LAST ATTACK, WHERE YOU DROPPED YOUR GUARD, GAVE ME THE HINT.

THE X SYMBOL WOULDN'T SHOW UP IF IT WAS A HIT.

THAT BODY SEARCH WAS

IT ALL BECAME CLEAR.

THE LAST CELL YOU PRESSED, C6.

HOWEVER, THAT WAS NOT THE CASE FOR

THINKING IT WOULD BE OVER, YOU DROPPED YOUR GUARD, RIGHT? IN CASE THE SHIP WAS FACING TOWARDS THE LEFT, IF YOU PRESS ON THE RIGHT, YOU'LL DEFINITELY HIT THE SHIP.

ONLY THAT X WAS SKEWED TO THE RIGHT SIDE, GIVING ME A HINT.

YOU EVALUATED WITH YOUR EYES THE MAXIMUM HEIGHT I COULD REACH WITH MY HANDS STRETCHED... AND THEN

AIMING FOR ANOTHER OBJECTIVE.

STOP AT A HEIGHT I WOULD BARELY BE ABLE TO REACH. THAT WAS YOUR OBJECTIVE.

MADE THE TOP ROW OF THE PANEL

THAT SUBMARINE WILL NEVER BE FOUND ANYMORE.

IT'LL BECOME A LOST SYMBOL.

AND THEN, YOU PLACED THE SUBMARINE THERE, FACING DOWNWARDS.

I WON'T BE ABLE TO TOUCH THE SUBMARINE, AND ONCE I MISS IT,

UNLESS I KNOW ABOUT THE TRICK,

US, KAKEROU, WILL ONLY ENSURE THAT.

THE DEVICE AND THE RULES CONFORM 100% TO THE CAPTAIN'S EXPLANATIONS.

REMEMBER THE WORDS OF THE KAKEROU REFEREE BEFORE THE MATCH STARTED.

NO WAY!

YOKOI-SAN,

THAT RULE IS JUST...

NORMALLY, BATTLESHIP IS PLAYED BY HITTING THE CELLS WHERE SHIPS ARE.

IF I WAS IN THE ROOM AT "THAT TIME" ...I'D HAVE NOTICED IT.

MOREOVER, IS THERE ANY REASON THAT THIS HAS TO BE "A NORMAL GAME OF BATTLE-SHIP"?

"IT SHOULD BE LIKE THAT", FOR A PERSON HARBORING SUCH THOUGHTS, IT CAN ONLY MEAN DEFEAT IN SUCH A SITUATION.

AT THAT TIME, WE WERE IN A POSITION WHERE WE HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO UTILIZE THE SYSTEM PROVIDED BY THE CAPTAIN.

I SHOULD HAVE HAD OOFUNA-SAN CHECK THE RULES MORE THOROUGHLY.

I KNEW IT...

VOJA, TAKE THESE TWO OUTSIDE!

THESE TWO ARE A DISTUR BANCE.

WAI-

HUH?

I HAVE SOME CONDITIONS FOR THIS MATCH.

WHAT IS IT?

IN THAT SITUATION, MAKING IT LOOK LIKE HE WAS OVERTURNING THE TABLES IN ANGER,

LACY IS CUNNING.

THAT'S WHY AT THAT TIME, LACY...

HE SILENTLY HID THIS RULE.

SO I'LL JUST SAY IT ONCE YOU MIGHT EVEN RECORD IT IF YOU WANT TO.

I HATE EXPLAINING THINGS,

HE HID HIS INTENTIONS BY ASKING OOFUNA TO RECORD THE RULES.

AND THEN, HE SIMPLY EXPLAINED:

HE DID THAT IN ORDER TO AVOID CONFIRMING THE DETAILS OF THE RULES.

KAKEROU WILL ONLY CHECK THAT THE PRESENT SYSTEM ACCURATELY REFLECTS THE CAPTAIN'S EXPLANATIONS.

ALL NETWORK CONNECTIONS HAVE BEEN CUT

IF THE ATTACK HITS A SHIP HIDDEN IN THE CELL, THE TYPE OF THE SHIP WILL BE EXPOSED.

IT WAS CRITICAL FOR THIS TO WORK THAT OUR CHECKING STOPPED THERE... AND INDEED, IT IS CORRECT TO SAY THAT THE SYSTEM REFLECTS AS PER THE CAPTAIN S EXPLANATIONS

ONCE BOTH SIDES ACCEPT PLAYING LACY'S GAME BY LACY'S RULES,

AND THEN, OOFUNA

HE ATTRACTED EVERYTHING TOWARDS HIM,

AND THEN FINALLY

EVEN SO...

HIS ALLY... LUCK...

DESTROYED THE KEY TO UNLOCKING THIS TRICK...

THE PHONE WHERE THE RULES HAD BEEN RECORDED, WITH HIS OWN HANDS...

SOLVED THE PUZZLE.

NOW, ONE SUBMARINE LEFT.

LAST TURN.

AND THIS IS MY

HACHINA... I'LL HIT IT... WITH ALL MY MIGHT.

THAT'S WHAT YOU WANTED TO SAY, RIGHT?

WHETHER YOU CAN HIT THE LAST ONE OR NOT, IT DEPENDS ON YOU...

LOOKING AT HIS PLACEMENTS NOW, I CAN CLEARLY SEE HIS OBJECTIVE.

AND EVEN IF THE SUBMARINE WAS TARGETED, HE CAN ALSO MAKE THE OPPONENT MISS, LIKE WHAT HAPPENED TO ME...

PLACING MANY SHIPS ON THE EDGE, WHERE PEOPLE GENERALLY HESITATE TO DO SO. AND PLACING A SHIP JUST ONE CELL ABOVE THE DESTROYER. IT'S AN UNTHINKABLE STRATEGY.

THE WHOLE PHRASE WAS "DEPENDS..." "IT DEPENDS ON YOU..."

S-

OOFUNA... STOP...

STOP IT...

STOP IT...

SO YOU MIGHT PLACE ONE OR TWO SHIPS HORIZONTALLY

BUT IT'LL BE WEIRD IF YOU MAKE THEM ALL VERTICAL.

JUST LIKE THIS...

BEFORE THE OPPONENT FALLS INTO THIS TRAP...

IN ORDER FOR THIS TRICK TO WORK EFFECTIVELY... IF IT WAS ME, WHAT WOULD I DO?

WHEN THE OPPONENT IS ATTACKING OTHER SHIPS. I'D WANT TO PREVENT THAT CASE.

THERE'S A CHANCE FOR THIS TRICK TO BE FOUND

IF IT WAS ME, I'D ALIGN THE DIRECTION OF ALL OF THE SHIPS . AND I WOULD MAKE THEM VERTICAL, NOT HORIZONTAL. MOREOVER, ALL SHIPS EXCEPT THE SUBMARINES WOULD BE FACING UPWARDS

IN SUCH A SITUATION, THE TRICK MIGHT BE DISCOVERED.

FOR EXAMPLE, A DESTROYER OCCUPIES 2 CELLS, BUT THE OPPONENT IS ONLY ABLE TO HIT IT ONCE.

YOUR WHOLE STRATEGY IS THE COMBINATION OF THE RADAR AND THE SUBMARINE TRICKS.

HOWEVER, THE MAIN TRICK IS STILL THE RADAR.

FOR YOU, YOU'LL GET THE BENEFIT AS LONG AS YOU GET A MISS AT LEAST ONCE. AND IF THAT MISS IS ON A SUBMARINE, IT'S A HUGE SUCCESS.

THINKING ABOUT IT, THIS TRICK IS NOT A PERFECT ONE... THERE ARE MANY OCCASIONS FOR IT TO BE FOUND MID-GAME.

A SUBMARINE IS VERY HARD TO FIND, AND IN ORDER TO MAKE THIS TRICK WORK, I'LL PLACE IT AT

IN THE FIRST PLACE,

THEN WHERE WOULD I PLACE THE SECOND SUBMARINE?

IN THAT CASE,

I'LL MAKE MY DECISION AFTER JUDGING THE BALANCE OF THE WHOLE BOARD.

THERE ARE 2 CELLS THAT PERFECTLY HAVE THE SAME PARTICULARITIES AS A1,

ALTHOUGH

THE TOP ROW.

THIS IS IT.

TOP RIGHT...

STOP IT...

STOP IT...

S-

I'LL BET

"BALANCE" (ORDER)...!

STILL EXISTS IN YOUR HEART...

ON THIS ONE.

STOOOOOOOOP!

S-

STOP...

WHAT IS EVIL?

CHAPTER 308
LOOKING AWAY IS EVIL

IT IS INDEED INSIDE ONE'S HEART.

MALICE,

UGLI-NESS,

NEGA-TIVITY,

ONE-SELF...

THE ONE WHO KNOWS THOSE THINGS THE BEST IS

NO ONE ELSE OTHER THAN

THEY LIVE BY LOOKING AWAY FROM IT...

SOME-TIMES,

SOMETIMES, PEOPLE FACE THEIR UGLINESS UPFRONT.

ISN'T EVIL NOTHING MORE THAN

CONTI-NUING TO LOOK AWAY?

TOUCH

PLASTIC

SOUL

THEN, ONE DAY, EVIL

WILL END UP FULLY LEAVING BEHIND

EVIL IS

CONTINUES TO SUPPRESS THE SENSE OF SHAME AND GUILT INSIDE THEM, AS IF IT NEVER EXISTED IN THE FIRST PLACE, BECOMING DEFIANT.

SOMEONE WHO CONTINUES TO LOOK AWAY AND

?...

THE NEGA-TIVITY IN ONE'S HEART...

HE... MISSED...

HE COULDN'T TOUCH... THE SHIP...

IF IT'S IN THE 2ND CABIN, IT WILL BE EXTINGUISHED IMMEDIATELY!

THE SPRINKLERS ALSO STARTED ACTIVATING!

SEEMS LIKE THERE'S A SMALL FIRE IN THE 2ND CABIN!

THE FIRE ALARM!?

WAI-
WAIT!!

MY WISH CAME TRUE!!

YOU MISSED!!

WHAT IS HE TALKING ABOUT?

HA HA!

FU... FU HAHA!

HE... HEHE HE!

YOU MISSED ...YOU MISSED!!

YOU...

DID YOU JUST...

IN ORDER TO MAKE ME MISS!!

WITH THAT REMOTE CONTROLLER RIGHT THERE... RIGHT BEFORE I TOUCHED THE SCREEN!!

MANI-PULATE THE SCREEN!? YOU MOVED IT, DIDN'T YOU!?

I'LL NEVER GIVE THIS BOAT TO ANYONE!!

IT'S MY WIN!!

ALL THE CON-TAINERS TOO..... YIHAAA!!

THE DIA-MONDS TOO!!

KU!

IS SUCH AN ACTION ALLOWED!?

I WAS AIMING AT THE CENTER... YET...

IT'S MY WIN!!

FROM HIS HEART...

.....

WHETHER THAT WAS CONSCIOUSLY DONE OR NOT... HE DID THAT.

INDEED, THE CAPTAIN MANIPULATED THE REMOTE CONTROLLER JUST NOW.

IN THIS GAME, FOR EXAMPLE,

WHEN A PLAYER DOES SUCH AN ACTION,

AND TAKES THE CHANCE TO PRESS AN "X" ON HIS ENEMY'S PANEL.

IF A PLAYER DIVERTS HIS ENEMY'S ATTENTION,

DO YOU SEE WHERE I AM GETTING AT?

...

WOULD IT BE ALLOWED, OR NOT ALLOWED "IN THIS MATCH"? .....WHAT DO YOU THINK?

ANYTHING IS ALLOWED.

IN THIS GAME, APART FROM FORBIDDING THE USAGE OF VIOLENCE; AND HAVING TO UTILIZE THE CAPTAIN'S SYSTEM,

IT'S ALRIGHT NOW, VOJA!

I WON!

I...
I...

AT THE LAST MOMENT,

LEAVE IT TO ME!!

BOMB

HIT

YOU WERE SWEPT FROM UNDER YOUR FEET.

A CRUISER HAS BEEN SUNK

GAME OVER

THIS MATCH ...

CAPTAIN LACY!!

THE WINNER IS

YOU HAVE BEEN DEFEATED IN THIS GAME.

ACCEPT THE REALITY.

IT IS DIFFERENT... FROM THE BEGINNING...

WHAT JUST HAPPENED ...?

I LOST...

I... LOST ...?

AAH...

BU HAHAHA HA

A NECKTIE, HUH!?

YOU WANTED

STOP OCCUPYING THE ENGINE ROOM OF THE BOAT, AND START THE ENGINE.

LET'S PREPARE FOR DEPAR-TURE.

HOW HORRIBLE... AT THAT TIME.. THINKING UP TO THIS POINT...

CALL THE TUGBOATS, AND RELEASE THE BOWLINES, DO IT FAST!!

OH?

?

YOU HAVE WON INDEED... HOWEVER, I GUESS SOMEONE WHO COMPLETELY FORGOT ABOUT LOOKING BACK ON HIS ACTIONS COULD NEVER NOTICE IT.

THE ENVIRONMENT WHERE BOTH OF YOU ARE IN RIGHT NOW HAS

FROM THERE, WE WON'T ENSURE OOFUNA-SAMA, YOKOI-SAMA, AND KAJI-SAMA'S SECURITY ANYMORE.

THEN, AS IT WAS DECIDED, THIS SHIP WILL LEAVE THE PORT IMME-DIATELY.

CAN ONLY BE DONE WHEN YOUR VIOLENCE IN YOUR TERRITORY IS HERE.

MAS-SACRE ..... BUT THAT...

ALREADY CHANGED.

EEK

EEK

EEK

IN THE BEGINNING, WHAT WERE YOU PLANNING TO DO AFTER YOU WIN?

YOU HAVE DESTROYED BY YOUR OWN HANDS THE MERITS OF YOUR VICTORY.

YOUR SOLDIERS ……

OF CALL-ING

THE METHOD ……

!!

HOWEVER, THE ONE WHO DESTROYED LACY'S MENTAL STATE TO SUCH A POINT WAS OOFUNA... FROM THE MOMENT WHEN THOSE TWO THINGS WERE DESTROYED... THIS MATCH HAS...

WILL NOT MEDDLE ANYMORE WITH EITHER OF YOU.

FROM THIS POINT, KAKEROU,

HAS BEEN DESTROYED BY YOURSELF.

THAT ALLY OF OOFUNA... HAS THOUGHT UP TO THIS POINT...

AT THE VERY LAST MOMENT...

YOU WERE SWEPT FROM UNDER YOUR FEET, HUH.

EEK

EEK

EEK

BEEN A 50/50.

RIGHT NOW...

THERE ARE THINGS THAT ARE DIFFERENT FROM BEFORE.

RIGHT NOW, THESE TWO...

ARE NOTHING MORE THAN 2 MEN FACING EACH OTHER.

2ND,

1ST,

THIS BOAT'S... WELL, WE SHOULD SAY THIS BRIDGE'S ENVIRONMENT HAS CHANGED.

THAT OOFUNA GAKUHITO DOESN'T EXIST ANYMORE.

OOFUNA GAKUHITO, WHO BLINDLY ACCEPTED PARTICIPATING IN LACY'S VERSION OF BATTLESHIP.

CHAPTER 309

THE KLYUCHI(KEY) TO TURN IT AROUND

BUT HE ALSO DESTROYED WITH HIS OWN HANDS THE INTERCOM, THE ONLY WAY TO SUMMON THEM... BLINDED BY HIS THIRST FOR VICTORY, NOT EVEN REALIZING THE IMPLICATIONS OF HIS OWN FOOLISH BEHAVIOR...

BUT NOT ONLY DID HE NOT DO IT,

3RD,

THE CREW MEMBERS WERE SUPPOSED TO BE CALLED BACK TO THE BRIDGE BEFORE THE END OF THE NO-VIOLENCE RULE.

I'M THE ONE WHO'LL KILL YOU!!

I!!

I!!

THIS MAN HAS BEEN BROKEN.

LIKE HELL I'D LET YOU!

RIGHT NOW, HE SHOULD BE THINKING ABOUT FLEEING FROM THE BRIDGE QUICKLY.

LACY WANTS TO CALL HIS CREW, BUT THERE'S NO TIME FOR HIM TO DO THAT.

IT'S POSSIBLE THAT SOME CREW MEMBERS ARE HEADING TOWARDS HERE AT THIS MOMENT

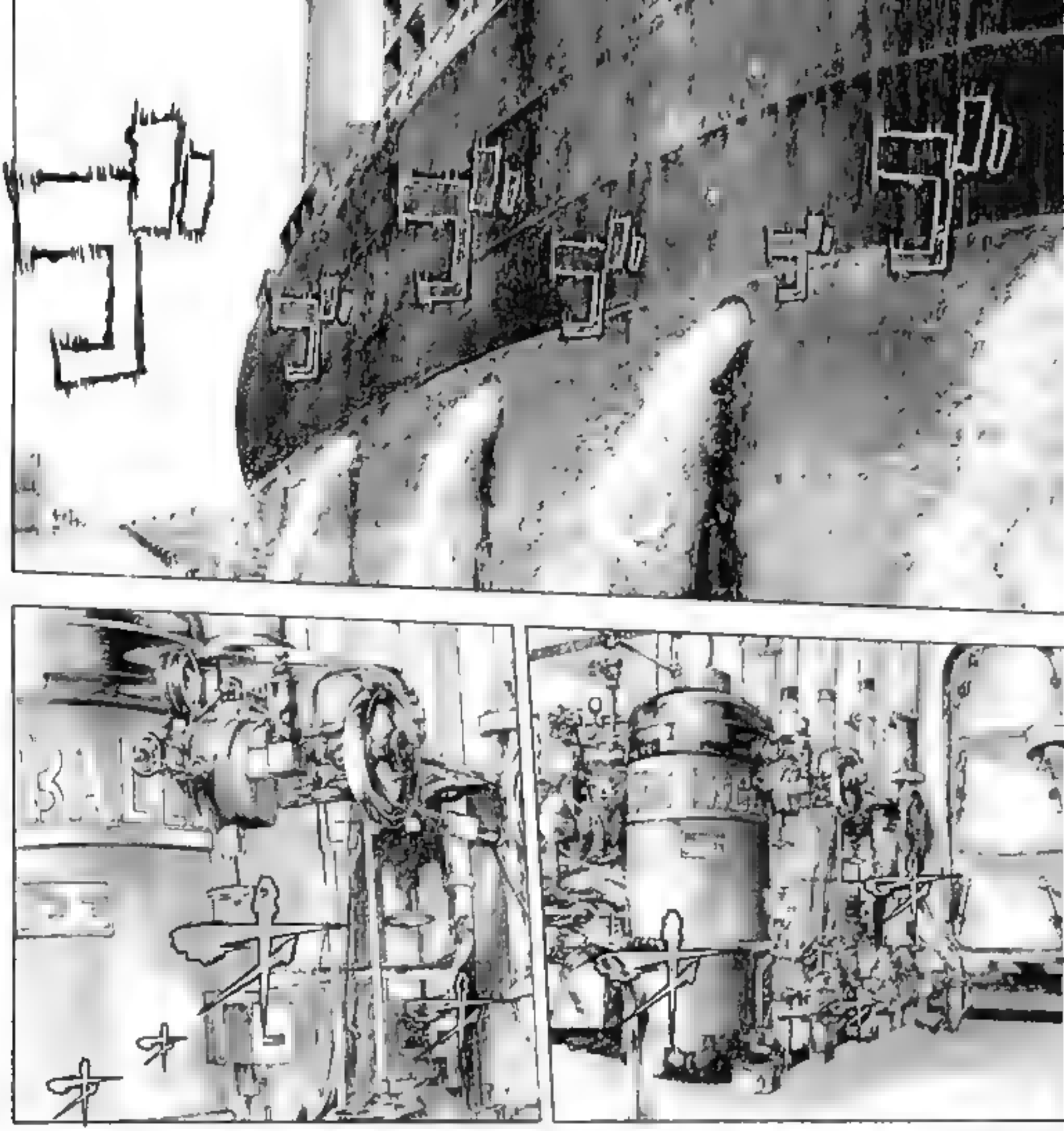
THERE IS NO OTHER WAY BUT TO BET ON ONE OPTION OR THE OTHER IF YOU WANT TO SURVIVE.

MAYBE YOU CAN TAKE LACY AS A HOSTAGE?

THERE ARE LOTS OF WAYS TO FLEE, BUT THE PROBABILITY OF SUCCESS WILL BE LOW

THE BOAT WILL TAKE OFF SOON.

IT'S NOT LIKE YOU LOST THE GAME TO WIN THE WAR EITHER... WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW IS TAKE CARE OF LACY, AND LEAVE THE BOAT QUICKLY.



YES, YOKOI-SAN!
KAJI, QUICK!

NO NEED TO THANK US.

.....

SO THIS IS A PROPER MEASURE.

OUR MISSION IS TO PROTECT YOU UNTIL THE END OF THE GAME.

THE CABIN HAS BECOME DANGEROUS SINCE THERE'S A FIRE

THE GAME WILL END QUICKLY IF YOU DON'T MOVE FAST

I TOLD YOU WE DON'T NEED ANY THANKS

THA-THANK YOU VERY MUCH!!

.....

THIS,

PERSO-NALLY.

I'LL LEND IT TO YOU.

WAIT,

WE'LL LEAVE THEN...

TREASURE IT, AS I WILL COME GET IT BACK SOON.

MY NAME IS SOUMA CHISATO.

WE HAVE TO GO QUICKLY TO THE BRIDGE!

WHY ARE YOU SMILING STUPIDLY!?

OI, KAJI!!

NO GOOD, KAJI!

!!

THERE'S NO WAY TO ESCAPE!

SO WE CAN'T PROTECT YOU ANY MORE!

THE GAME JUST ENDED!

SEE YOU ANY-MORE

I DONT WANT TO

ALONE...

LEAVE... ME...

LEAVE... ME...

JUST...

THIS MAN

WITH ANY-MORE...

BE INVOLVED

I DONT WANT TO...

I WON THE GAME!!

HURRY AND SEPARATE THIS MAN FROM ME!!

HURRY!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?

RE-

REFE-REE!

THE BOAT WILL SOON TAKE OFF.

JUST AS PROMISED,

CONGRA-TULATIONS ON YOUR VICTORY.

REFEREE, THE BOAT IS DEPART-ING.

UNDER-STOOD, LET'S GO.

WAIT!

THERE ARE STILL A LOT OF CREW MEMBERS HERE. FIRST OF ALL, THE BOAT WILL DEPART, AND THEN

THEY WILL TAKE OVER US, AS OUR TASK AND ROLE WILL BE FINISHED.

LIKE HELL I'D ACCEPT SUCH TREAT-MENT!!

AFTER WIN-NING,

THERE'S NO DEPARTURE WITHOUT ME!! THE BOAT CAN ONLY DEPART WITH ME IN IT!!

THEN, WE WOULD NOT MEDDLE WITH ANYTHING AFTER THAT.

WINNING WOULD PROVIDE YOU THE SAFE AND QUICK DEPARTURE OF THE BOAT.

THERE WAS NO CLAUSE REGARDING YOUR SAFETY IN OUR CONTRACT.

WAI

...T

DEPARTING ...?

NOT HAPPENING!

OOFUNA-SAMA,

I HAVE SOMETHING TO TELL YOU... BUT FIRST, WE'LL LEAVE THE BOAT....

EVEN IF I HAVE TO TRADE MY LIFE FOR IT!

I WON'T LET YOU DO THAT,

DROP IT.

LOST THE GAME.

YOU

BUT, WE CAN'T GUARANTEE THAT OOFUNA WILL NOT TRY TO MEDDLE WITH THE BOAT'S DEPARTURE UPON WAKING UP.

TAKE HIM OUT OF THE BRIDGE AND BRING HIM INTO ONE OF THE CABINS.

INDEED ...

I THINK WE SHOULD LEAVE THEM LIKE THIS.

JEEZ... SUCH A TENACIOUS MAN...

ALRIGHT, THERE ARE TWO MEN WHO HAVE LOST CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE BRIDGE... WHAT SHOULD WE DO WITH THEM?

WITH THEIR HANDS FULLY OCCUPIED WITH THE FIRE, AND THE BOAT DEPARTING,

BY THE WAY, OOFUNA'S ALLY...

HE WAS ABLE TO SEE THROUGH LACY'S TRICK EVEN FROM OUTSIDE THE BRIDGE...

WHETHER OOFUNA CAN KEEP LIVING OR NOT IS UP TO GOD RIGHT NOW...

IT SEEMS LIKE NOBODY WILL COME TO THE BRIDGE.

HE HAD ENOUGH TIME TO SAY IT...

"THE SUBMARINES ARE LOCATED IN AI AND JI"... THE FIGHT WOULD HAVE BEEN OVER JUST BY SAYING THAT...

HE JUST HAD TO EXPLAIN IT BLUNTLY.

WHAT IS STRANGE TO ME IS, IF HE REALLY WANTED OOFUNA TO WIN EASILY,

IT FEELS LIKE HE DIDN'T ATTACH MUCH IMPORTANCE TO THE PRINCIPLE OF WINNING THE GAME...

MOREOVER, IT ALSO FEELS LIKE HE WAS GIVING THAT MAN NAMED OOFUNA GAKUHITO A TEST...

OR MAYBE IT'S THE OPPOSITE ...

...

ㄱㅁ

THIS GUY IS SO HEAVY!

.....

NO COMPLAINING, JUST DISPOSE OF HIM QUICKLY IN A CABIN.

.....

HOWEVER, TRYING TO UNCOVER THAT MAN, WHO IS HIDING HIMSELF SO MUCH, JUST OUT OF CURIOSITY,

I'M INTERESTED...

NO, TRUTH IS I AM EXTREMELY FASCINATED...

A BOX THAT SHOULD NOT BE OPENED.

THERE IS NO NEED TO OPEN OUT OF CURIOSITY

MIGHT INVITE DANGER TO ME.

I WONDER... IF THERE WILL BE ONE DAY WHERE WE WILL BE ABLE TO MEET.

YOU SAVED ME A LOT OF TROUBLE...

REFEREE NO.91, MOGAMI TAEKO,

TH-THEN ...

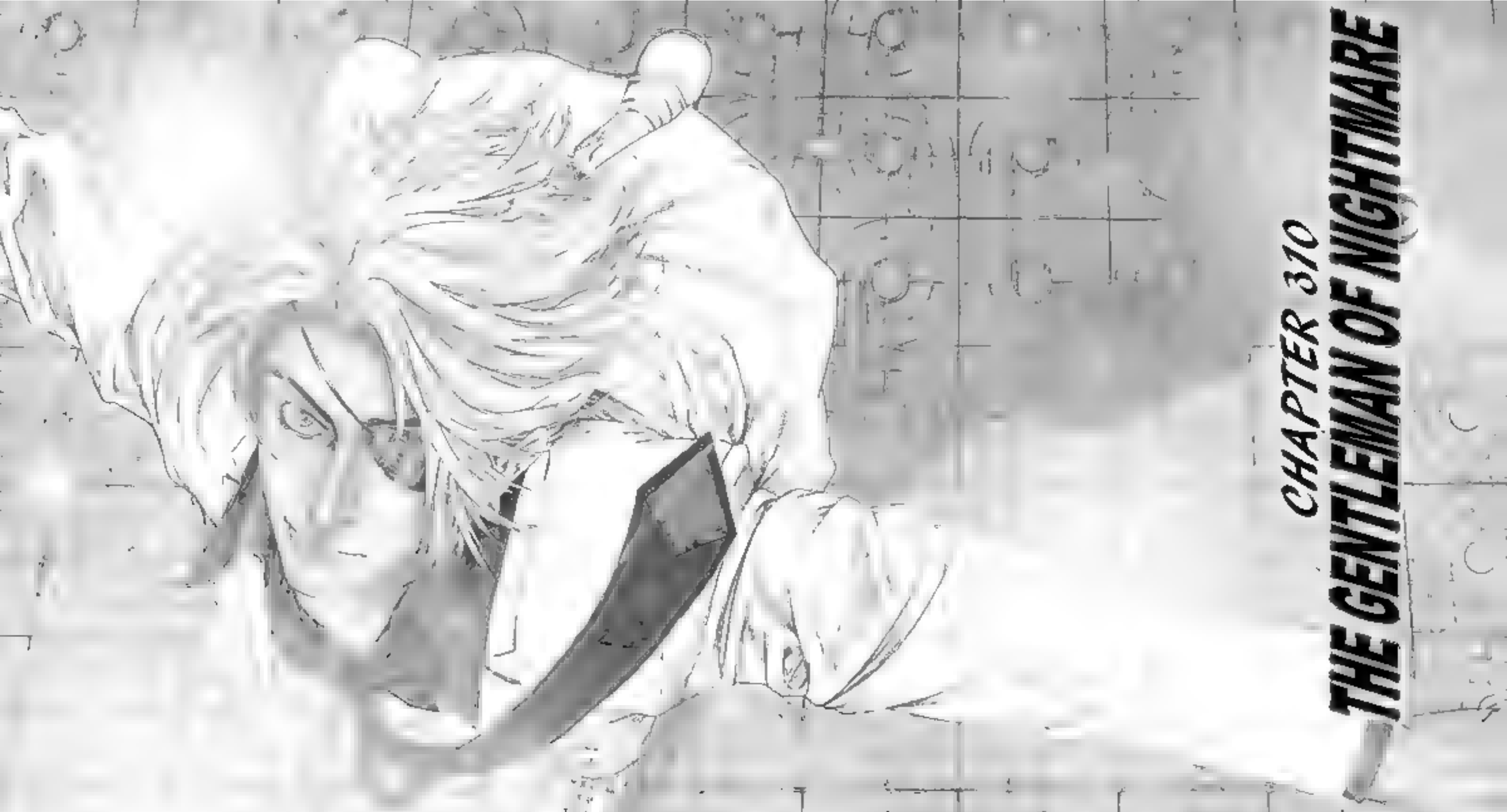
DEPART-ING!?

ARE THEY FOLLOWING US, YOKOI-SAN!?

THEY AREN'T! OF COURSE,

BECAUSE THE BOAT STARTED MOVING... IT'S DEPART-ING!

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO OOFUNA-SAN!?



CHAPTER 310

THE GENTLEMAN OF NIGHTMARE

GETTING COLD...

.....

WAKING UP...

COMING TO ONE'S SENSES...

.....

WHEN DID THIS LONG DREAM...

START...?

TRUTH IS YOU ALSO FELT RELIEVED DIDN'T YOU?

THINK OF MY POSITION HERE. YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN TROUBLED BY IT TOO. RIGHT?

CALM DOWN..

BULLSHIT!! I WAS SO STUPID TO HAVE TRUSTED YOU!

I DID NOT CONFIDE TO YOU SO THAT YOU COULD DO THAT

WHAT DID YOU DO!? WITHOUT EVEN CONSULTING ME!! EVEN IF YOU'RE MY FATHER IN-LAW...

ILL... PUT...

END...

ILL PUT AN END TO THIS!

AH...AH! I SAW HER ON THE DECK JUST NOW...

I SAW HER TOO.

SHE SHOULD BE IN THAT AREA.

NIGHT-MARE...

I'LL PUT AN END TO... IT...

TO THIS...

SINCE WHEN DID HE REALIZE THAT

THIS DREAM WAS A NIGHTMARE?

IT MIGHT BE...

GOT IT.

DARLING, WE HAVE A GUEST.

I'M COMING.

VISITED HIM.

WHEN A CERTAIN GENTLE-MAN AND KID

AND WAS ALMOST...

SHE WAS ABANDONED BY HIS FATHER-IN-LAW JUST AFTER HER BIRTH...

NADIA, STOP!!

DROWNED IN THE SEA BY HIS WIFE.

NADIA

WHAT ARE YOU DOING NADIA!!

WAS THE BEGINNING OF HIS NIGHTMARE.

MEETING WITH HIS DAUGHTER AGAIN

THE QUEST TO ARRIVE AT YOU HERE WAS QUITE A CHALLENGING ONE....

I FOUND HER IN AN ORPHANAGE IN NOVOSIBIRSK.

THERE WAS ALMOST NO RECORD OF ANYTHING THAT COULD LINK YOU AND VOJA. MOST LIKELY, THAT WAS ALSO AN ACT DONE BY YOUR FATHER-IN-LAW. SUCH A TERRIBLE STORY

IS THIS A DREAM ..?

HAVING A REUNION WITH HIS DAUGHTER... AT THAT MOMENT, HE COULD ONLY THINK IRONICALLY..

NO ONE KNEW THAT HE HAD A CHILD...

I COULD ONLY LOOK FOR YOU WITH THE MEMORY THAT SHE MIRACULOUSLY HAS.

A STRONG WISH PROBABLY MADE THIS MIRACULOUS REUNION HAPPEN

WOULD YOU PLEASE INTRODUCE HIM TO ME?

Z..n_

AH!

HE LOOKED CON-FUSED.

WHO ARE YOU...?

NO... IN THE FACE OF THE BOND BETWEEN FATHER AND DAUGHTER, IT'S PROBABLY NOT THAT IMPORTANT

SHE IS REALLY A SMART KID... BUT, THERE IS A PART OF HER THAT NORMAL PEOPLE MIGHT FIND DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND

HIS BELOVED, BEAUTIFUL WIFE...

NICE TO MEET YOU. I AM NADIA.

THE WIFE WHO TRIED TO KILL HIS PRECIOUS DAUGHTER.

SHE NEVER TALKED ABOUT THAT TIME... JUST AS IF SHE HAD COMPLETELY FORGOTTEN ABOUT IT.

AS OF TODAY, HE WAS STILL NOT ABLE TO COMPREHEND WHAT DROVE HER TO DO SUCH A THING

MAYBE SHE JUST FELT, EVEN FOR A MOMENT, THAT HER DAUGHTER WAS MYSTERIOUSLY ESTRANGED TO HER.

WAS IT BECAUSE SHE HAD NO NATURAL DISPOSITION TO BE A MOTHER...?

SHE DID NOT SHOW ANY REACTION.

EVEN WITH HER DAUGHTER IN FRONT OF HER.

OR

HIS DAUGHTER

NA.. DIA...

VOJA...

HOW-EVER, WHAT ARE THESE?

YOU ARE EXTREMELY PRETTY.. IT WAS WORTH BEARING THE TROUBLE TO MAKE IT THIS FAR

NICE TO MEET YOU, MILADY.

THE MAN? HE DIDN'T KNOW WHO TOOK ACTION FIRST...

ESPE-CIALLY

CAN NEVER FORGIVE A PERSON WHO IS ABLE TO RECOGNIZE THE VALUE OF DIAMONDS.

THOSE WHO WEAR THEM...

DIA-MONDS.

DIA-MONDS ...

THIS IS UNFOR-GIVABLE.

YOU KNOW, I...

HEY!

THIS IS THE DEATH PENALTY.

IT IS UNFOR GIVABLE TO WEAR THEM.

OH?

THERE WAS NO OTHER WAY...

AFTER ALL, DIAMONDS ARE PRECIOUS STONES FULL OF SIN.

WAAAH! WHAT ARE YOU DOING!!

NADIA AAAAA AAA!!!

A DIA-MOND...

IS ALSO

YOUR WEDDING RING

WE NEED MORE MEN! FASTER!

WHERE... WHERE ARE YOU!?

WHERE...

THE METERS ARE FUNCTIONING NORMALLY.

HERE!

ALL MEMBERS OF THE CREW JUST RECEIVED AN E-MAIL FROM HER.

I THINK SHE'S AROUND THERE.

VOJA...

MY VOJA...

THANK YOUR DAUGHTER FOR IT.

IF I KILL YOU, MY TRIP HERE WILL BECOME MEANINGLESS... AND I DON'T LIKE THE IDEA OF MAKING HER ALONE AGAIN.

YOU ALSO BEAR THE SAME SIN, BUT .

SHE'LL NEVER STOP UNTIL SHE SEES THE DEATH OF HER DESIGNATED PREY... THAT'S HER CHARACTER

LIKE ASKING YOU TO "KILL THAT PERSON" ...

NO ONE KNOWS IF SHE WAS BORN WITH IT, OR IF IT IS A RESULT OF THE TRAUMA DONE BY HER MOTHER...

THERE IS SOMETHING SPECIAL ABOUT THIS GIRL.

AH, RIGHT...

I'M NOT FINISHED YET.

FROM TIME TO TIME, SHE'LL REQUEST... KINDNESS FROM YOU.

YOU'LL UNDERSTAND IF YOU LIVE WITH HER FOR A WHILE

THEN SHE'LL HAVE TO DIRTY HER HANDS BY HERSELF.

IF HER DEMANDS ARE NOT MET,

NOW, WHAT SHE NEEDS THE MOST IS

HER REAL PARENTS... PARENTS SHE CAN RELY ON.

IT'S NOT A BIG DEAL ANYWAY. PARENTS MAKE THEIR KIDS' WISHES COME TRUE.

YOU DON'T WANT YOUR CHILD TO BE A MURDERER, RIGHT?

OF BEING LOYAL TO HIS COUNTRY AND FULFILL-ING HIS PRINCIPLES...

HE HAD LOST THE PATH

IS HIS ONLY FAMILY... HE LOVED HER...

HIS DAUGHTER THAT HE HAD BEEN LOOKING FOR...

WILL YOU LIVE TOGETHER, OR WILL YOU ABANDON HER AGAIN?

BUT, YOU ALSO HAVE THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE... DECIDE NOW.

HE PREDICTED THAT "THIS WON'T LAST FOR LONG".

HER APPETITE TOWARDS THE PREY SHE SEES...

WAS JUST AS WHAT THE GENTLEMAN SAID AFTER KILLING HIS FATHER-IN-LAW

A JOURNEY OF NIGHT-MARES.

FINDING AN "UNDERGROUND WORLD" WHERE HE'D BE ABLE TO KEEP FULFILLING HIS DAUGHTER'S WISHES.

AT THAT TIME, LACY WAS ONLY THINKING ABOUT

AS IF HE WAS AWARE OF EVERYTHING, THE GENTLEMAN APPEARED IN FRONT OF THEM AGAIN.

HE EVEN FORGOT THAT THIS WAS A NIGHT-MARE.

PEOPLE CAN

YOU CAN GET USED TO SEA SICKNESS.

GET USED TO ANY-THING.

HE MIGHT STILL HAVE HAD A NORMAL MENTALITY

AT THAT TIME,

WELL, THAT IS,

COMPARED TO WHAT HE BECAME LATER.

HE NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT

GRADUALLY TURNED INTO MOMENTS OF JOY.

THE HESITANT MURDER-ING

LONG DREAM.

VOJA!

WHERE ARE YOU!

AWAKING FROM THIS

LET MY DEATH BE THE END!!

WATCH ME DIE!

IF HE DOESN'T WAKE UP,

WHAT YOU WISHED FOR!

I'LL SHOW YOU

BECAUSE IF HE DOESN'T COME TO HIS SENSES,

HE WON'T NEED TO REALIZE

VOJA AAA!!

THAT THIS IS A NIGHTMARE...

AM I...?

WHO...

A FEW DAYS LATER...

BALLAST WATER DIS-CHARGE?

YES.

TO PUT IT SIMPLY BALLAST WATER KEEPS THE BALANCE BETWEEN THE WEIGHT OF THE CARGO AND HOW MUCH OF THE SHIP IS SUBMERGED IN WATER.

AS A RESULT, SOME BIG SHIPS CAN EASILY BE TURNED OVER DUE TO BAD BALANCE.

BAD BALANCE

IF YOU RELEASE TOO MUCH BALLAST WATER AND BREAK THE BALANCE, THE SHIP WILL FLOAT TOO HIGH, CAUSING THE SHIP TO BE UNSTABLE

CARGOES

BALLAST WATER

GOOD BALANCE

IDEALLY THE SHIP CAN KEEP A PROPER SUBMERSION WITH A GOOD BALANCE BETWEEN THE CARGO AND THE BALLAST WATER

CARGOES

BALLAST WATER

RIGHT NOW ALTHOUGH THE RESCUE OPERATION FOR THE CARGO SHIP FROM PANAMA IS ONGOING.

THE REASON WAS PROBABLY EITHER A MISHANDLING OF THE BALLAST WATER OR A MALFUNCTION OF THE BALLAST PUMPS.

AS IT HAS ALREADY BEEN MORE THAN 72 HOURS AFTER THE INCIDENT IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT ANY ON-BOARD PASSENGER HAS SURVIVED.

THERE WAS SUCH A CASE A LONG TIME AGO NEAR THE ALEUTIAN ISLANDS.

A MYSTERIOUS POINT IN THIS CASE IS THAT AN UNIDENTIFIED CORPSE.

PRESUM ABLY A JAPANESE. HAS BEEN FOUND.

.....

ALSO,

PRRRRRRR

TO: ALL

AN ORDER FROM THE CAPTAIN VIA VOJA. YOU ARE ALL FORBIDDEN FROM ENTERING THE BRIDGE AND THE BALLAST PUMP ROOM UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

TO: ALL

AN ORDER FROM THE CAPTAIN VIA VOJA. YOU ARE ALL FORBIDDEN FROM ENTERING THE BRIDGE AND THE BALLAST PUMP ROOM UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

WHO... ARE YOU?

SINCE YOU'RE THERE, IT SHOULD BE ALRIGHT BUT I WAS A BIT WORRIED AS I HAVEN'T RECEIVED ANY NOTICE...

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE PEOPLE MEDDLING WITH THE DEPARTURE, AND THE KAKEROU MATCH?

VOJA.

THAT... VOICE...

.....

!

?...

I REMEMBER

HAVING HEARD YOUR VOICE BEFORE.

CHAPTER 311
BOSS & BOSS

HAVING HEARD YOUR VOICE BEFORE.

I REMEM-BER

I DON'T RECALL EVER HAVING HEARD YOURS.

EVEN IF YOU'VE HEARD MINE,

?

.....

AREN'T YOU SEEING IT TOO?

I CAN SEE MOUNT FUJI IN FRONT OF MY EYES UPON HEARING YOUR VOICE.

FUJI...

WERE YOU MANI-PULATING THEM?

ARE THAT CAPTAIN AND VOJA YOUR UNDER-LINGS?

BY THE WAY,

WHO KNOWS . .

!

THEY WERE FATHER AND DAUGHTER, WHO HAD BEEN BURDENED BY A DIFFICULT SITUATION... WE HAD SUCH A RELATIONSHIP WHERE I FED ON THEM, AND THEY FED ON ME.

REALLY? THEN, NEVER MIND.

I CAN'T STAND BEING INTERROGATED BY YOU.

THEN, WHY?

THEY ARE NEITHER WORKING FOR ME NOR MANIPULATED BY ME.

YES.

SIT

WERE THEY DEFEATED?

MY FOOD.

GOOD... THAT IS GOOD AS WELL.

THEY BECAME

IN THE END, PEOPLE ARE LIVING THE WAY THEY WISH TO LIVE.

EVEN IF PEOPLE CURSE THEIR MISFORTUNE,

AND COMPLAIN ABOUT THEIR UNREWARDING LIFE,

PEOPLE CHOOSE TO LIVE THE WAY THEY WISH TO LIVE.

WHETHER THEY HAD BEEN REGRETTING AND HATING THE WAY THEY LIVED, OR WHETHER THIS IS EXACTLY THE OUTCOME THEY HAD BEEN WISHING FOR,

YOU,

ME,

WELL, WE ALL HAVE BEEN LIVING A LIFESTYLE THAT IS ALWAYS FULL OF RISK.

THEY PAID A HEAVY PRICE TODAY FOR THE WAY THEY HAD BEEN LIVING.

DEPENDING ON ONE'S WAY OF LIFE, THE REWARDS AND THE COSTS WILL BE DIFFERENT.

USO... GUI...?

YOU REALLY SHOULD STOP PLAYING DUMB.

AND USOGUI AS WELL.

I NEVER THOUGHT THAT YOU THE LEADER OF KAKEROU WOULD HAVE BEEN THERE ALSO.

.....

.....

I HEARD FROM VOJA THAT THE MEMBER NAMED KAJI WAS ALSO ON THE BOAT

BUT,

MADARAME BAKU, WAS ALSO THERE.

MEANING, IT WOULDN'T BE SURPRISING, EVEN IF HIS PARTNER,

QUITE A SCARY MAN...

SUCH AN UNBELIEVABLE OCCURRENCE .. I WONDER WHO LEAKED THE INFORMATION...?

I GUESS HE SHOULD BE DESPERATE TOO

WELL,

HE REALLY GOT ME GOOD.... I NEVER THOUGHT THAT HE'D BE TARGETING MY DIAMONDS...

RIGHT AFTER I TOOK THE 50 BILLION FROM HIM...

SUR-PASS-ING...

THE LEADER ...

HAVE YOU SIT AT THE TABLE FOR THE SECOND "SURPASSING THE LEADER"

BECAUSE WITHOUT THE MONEY, HE COULD NEVER

MADARA-ME...

BAKU...

I HAVE YOUR DIA-MONDS.

!!

WAS THERE ANYTHING SPECIAL TO YOU THERE?

THE DIA-MONDS,

SO, WHAT WAS YOUR REASON FOR BEING THERE?

IT WOULD BE NICE TO HAVE A TALK WITH YOU, WHILE YOU'RE WEARING THE DIAMONDS. WE CAN ALSO HAVE A GAMBLE IF YOU'D LIKE TOO.

SHALL WE MEET TOGETHER?

INTER-ESTING... HOW'S THAT?

.....

NOT ONLY JAPAN, BUT YOU WILL ALSO BE ABLE TO OBTAIN A PART OF MY BACK CHANNELS THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE WORLD.

WINNING AGAINST ME WOULD OPEN A BIG OPPORTUNITY FOR KAKEROU.

EVEN WITHOUT DOING THAT, I CAN'T SHAKE OFF THE FEELING THAT WE JUST ACCOMPLISHED SOMETHING BIG.

FORCEFULLY TRYING TO GROW WOULD ONLY RESULT IN MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO FALL.

THERE IS NO NEED.

RIGHT NOW, WE ARE WELL BALANCED.

WE SHOULD KEEP QUIET FOR A MOMENT.

I WOULD NOT MIND MEETING YOU DURING IT.

ALTHOUGH IT'S A REALLY SHORT TIME,

HOWEVER, THERE IS STILL TIME UNTIL THEN.

I CAN GIVE YOU THESE DIAMONDS BACK...

OOFUNA GAKUHITO,

BUT...

THIS TIME, WE MADE SURE THAT NO REINFORCEMENTS WOULD COME UNTIL THE END OF THE MATCH,

THAT WAS MEANING-LESS.

I HAVE SOME-THING TO TELL YOU.

HERE IS...

HACHINA... WHERE ARE YOU?

SHIP... WHERE IS THE SHIP!?

HACHI.. NA...

...

BECAUSE THERE WERE NO CALLS MADE FOR REINFORCEMENTS IN THE FIRST PLACE...

THE SHIP WILL SINK IN THE SEA WITH THE WEAPONS.

!!

HACHI-NA!!

BE LEVERAGED BY THE REAL INSTIGATOR OF THIS WEAPON LEAKAGE INCIDENT... HE WILL MAKE YOU OUT AS "A CRIMINAL WHO UTILIZED HIS AUTHORITY TO LEAK THE SECRETS"...

BECAUSE IT CAN CAUSE A FOREIGN ISSUE WITH THE USA, THE LEAKAGE OF THE F35 WILL BE COMPLETELY EXTINGUISHED. THERE WILL BE NO OFFICIAL PROOF NOR WITNESSES AT ALL.

IRONICALLY, YOUR DEATH WILL PROBABLY

AND IN THE CABIN, THEY'LL FIND YOUR JACKET, AND ID CARD.

YOUR DISAPPEARANCE WILL SOON BE INVESTIGATED AS A MISSING PUBLIC SERVANT INCIDENT, BUT SOON, YOU'LL BE DECLARED DEAD AND THE INVESTIGATION WILL BE CUT OFF.

I RECEIVED HELP FROM YOU AT THE MPD.

I AM HACHINA FROM THE CIRO.

AND AS A WAY TO THANK YOU, I HAVE BEEN HELPING YOU RESOLVE THE INCIDENT INVOLVING THE LEAKING OF GOVERNMENT SECRETS

EXACTLY... ARE YOU...?

WHO...

MOREOVER, THE BOAT WILL SINK, AND THE SMUGGLING WILL FAIL...

THAT'S NOT WHAT I AM SAYING!

LEAVING ASIDE THE RESULT,

WOULD YOU HAVE BEEN ABLE TO FIND THE BOAT JUST BY YOURSELF?

WHAT DO YOU THINK THIS IS, OTHER THAN HELP?

HELPING ME YOU SAID!?

WASN'T IT TO KILL ME!?

WHAT WAS YOUR OBJEC-TIVE!?

YOU DEFINITELY HAD ANOTHER OBJECTIVE!

THAT IS TRUE.

!!

.....
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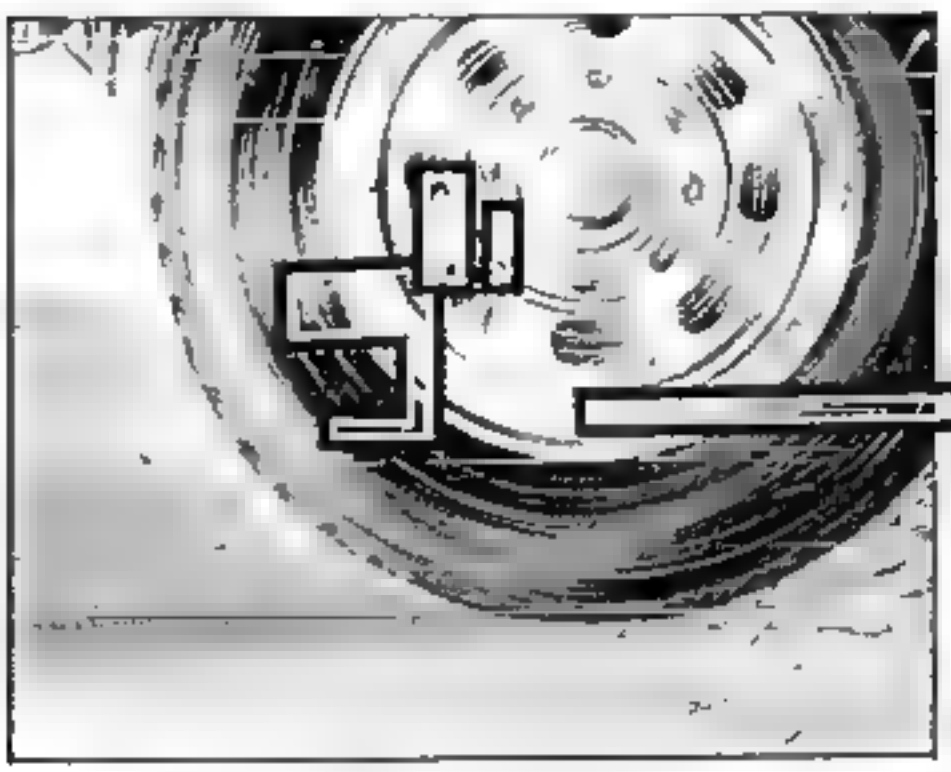
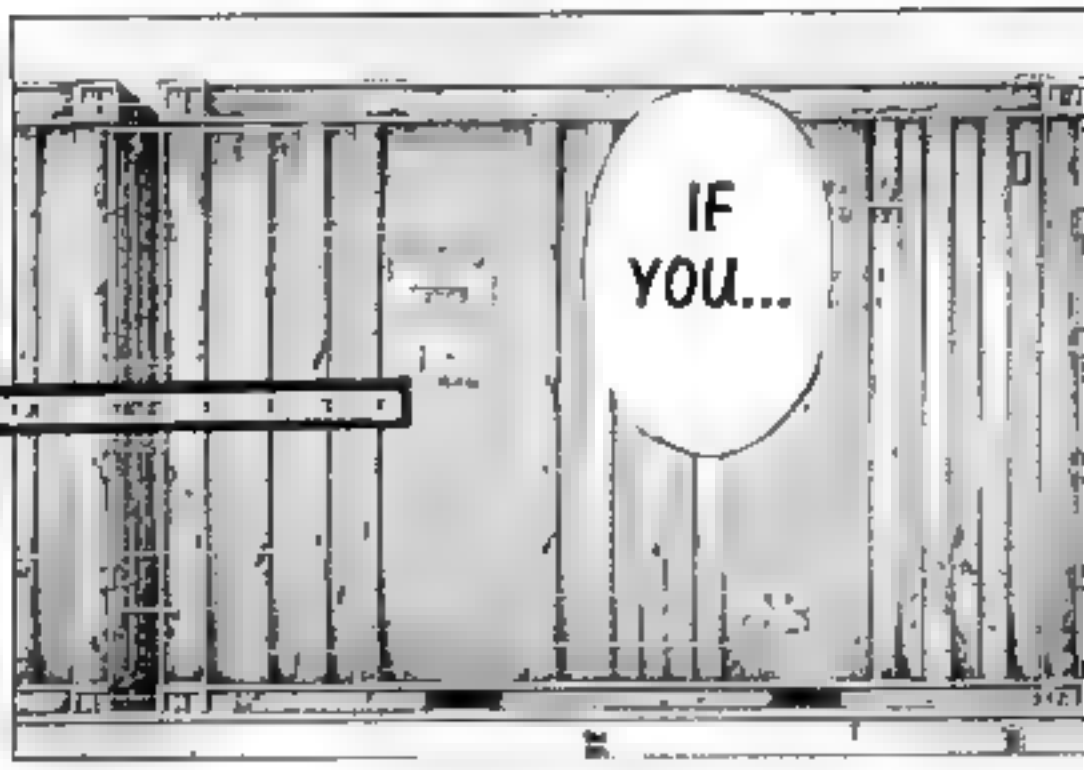
ドクン

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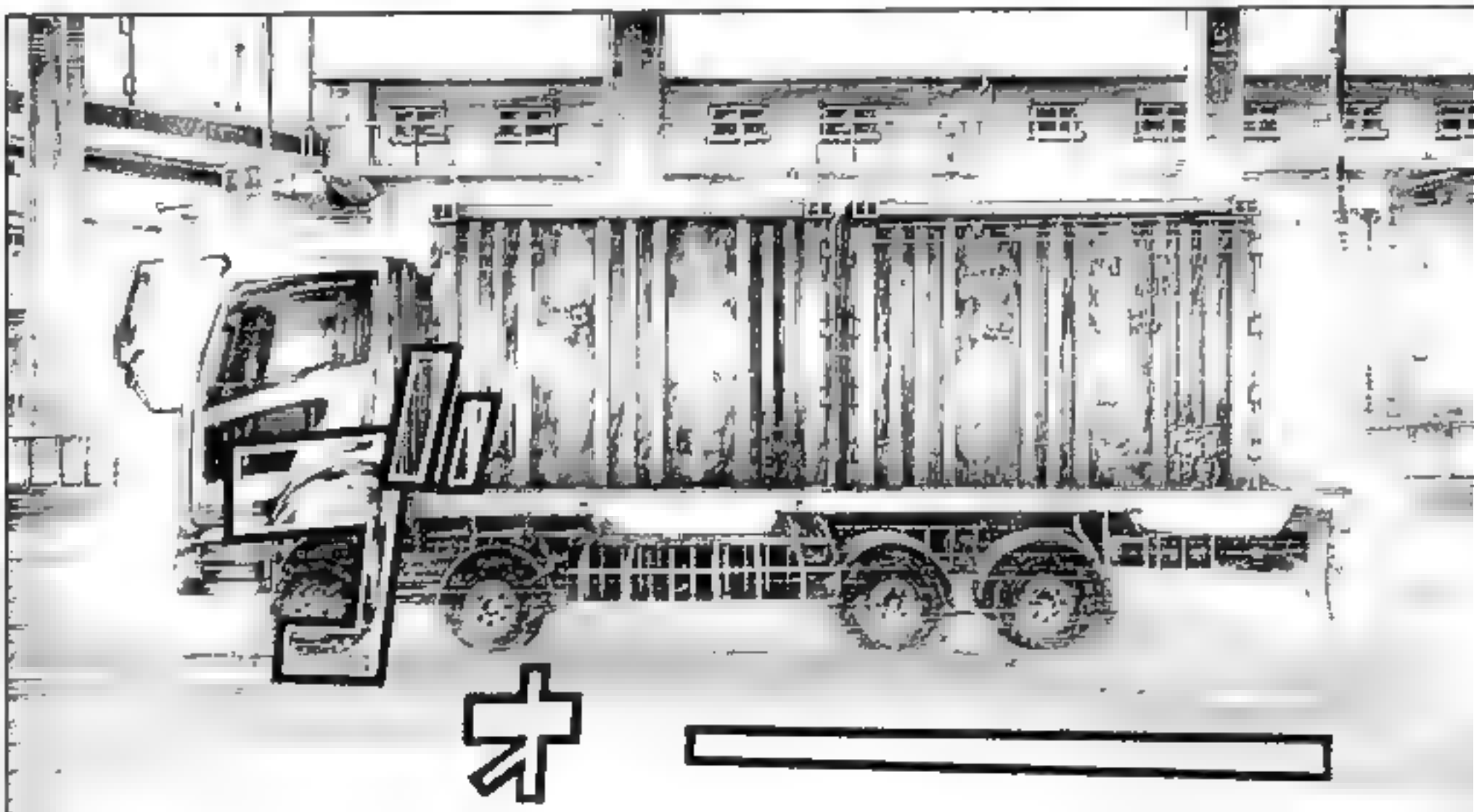
YOU...



THE REAL INSTIGATOR HIDING IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE WILL MAKE HIS MOVE... IF I WERE ABLE TO DETECT HIS TAIL, THEN IT WOULD BECOME MUCH EASIER TO IDENTIFY HIM... MOREOVER, THIS OUTCOME

BECOME A DEAD PERSON RIGHT NOW,

IT'LL MAKE IT EASIER FOR ME IF YOU ARE DEAD NOW.

FROM OUR PHONE TALK AT THE MPD, IT'S ABOUT TIME THAT THE PEOPLE LOOKING FOR ME SET THEIR EYES ON YOU.

WILL HELP ME A LOT TOO.

HOWEVER... A BIT LONGER... JUST A BIT LONGER...

AND,

GAKUTO, I WANT TO CONTINUE BEING...

IF YOU WISH, I CAN ALSO MAKE IT SO THAT YOU ARE THE ONE WHO SWEEPS AWAY THAT VERMIN.

I ALSO KNOW THE PHONE NUMBERS OF THOSE WHO KEEP CONTACT WITH KIDOU.

IF YOU WORK WITH YOKOI, AND DECLARE YOUR IDENTITY AT A PROPER TIMING, IT WILL BE EASY TO FIND OUT WHO THAT VERMIN HIDING IN THE MOD IS... AND,

THE HACHINA YOU KNOW

WITH YOU...

HACHINA... WHO EXACTLY... IS THIS MAN...

HACHI-NA... WHAT...

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR LEG!?

WHAT'S WRONG!? HACHI-NA!?

HEY!!

!!

*WAKOUDO SHOBOU(BOOKSTORE WAKOUDO), MODELLED AFTER "OKURAMAE SHOBOU"(BOOKSTORE OKURAMAE), HISTORICALLY NOTABLE FOR BEING ONE OF THE OLDEST STORES STILL STANDING IN ITS AREA.

和向奴書房

THAT'S WHY I WILL PIN OUR HOPE ON IT

I BELIEVE THAT THE CHANCE OF YOU LOSING YOUR MEMORY AGAIN FOR THE PRESENT IS VERY LOW.

WHEN... AND HOW MUCH MEMORY YOU WILL LOSE, I CAN'T TELL...

BUT PLEASE LISTEN,

AND BELIEVE THAT THIS MOMENT IS THE MOMENT THAT YOU'LL NEVER LOSE.

RIGHT NOW, THE PEOPLE WHO KNOW ABOUT IT ARE ONLY LEADER (TATSUKI)

AND I, EBA.

CHAPTER 312
DEJA VU

THIS CANNOT BE KNOWN BY ANYONE ELSE. EVEN IF THEY ARE

A REFEREE.

PLEASE COME TO MY PLACE WITHOUT LETTING ANYONE NOTICE.

IF YOU FEEL THAT YOU'VE LOST YOUR MEMORY AGAIN SOME DAY,

AND I'M NOT AROUND YOU AT THAT TIME,

第100話

THE PRINCE BEE
AUTHOR: SAKAEDA HARUO

...EBA, THIS IS...?

IT'S JUST AN AMATEUR WORK. IT'S TOO EMBARRASSING SO I DIDN'T LET ANYONE KNOW ABOUT MY IDENTITY AS A PICTURE BOOK AUTHOR.

THIS PICTURE BOOK IS BARELY SEEN IN THE MARKET.

IT'S A BOOK DRAWN BY ME.

IT'S BEEN MY HOBBY SINCE I STARTED READING PICTURE BOOKS FOR YOU WHEN YOU WERE A CHILD.

SOUICHI-SAMA, PLEASE GO TO THAT BOOKSTORE,

知向双書房

RIGHT NOW, IT'S ONLY SOLD IN AN OLD BOOKSTORE RUN BY A FRIEND OF MINE, WITH MY PUBLIC IDENTITY, A UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR...

DON'T FORGET THAT THERE WILL BE A FEW DAYS BETWEEN THE ORDERING AND DELIVERY.

I WILL GET THE ORDER FORM THROUGH THE BOOKSTORE OWNER.

AND THEN I'LL PUT THE MESSAGE, WHICH INCLUDES THE TIME AND THE LOCATION OF THE MEETING, INTO THE BOOK.

AND USE YOUR PUBLIC NAME, "HACHINA", TO ORDER THIS BOOK.

.....

IT'S A LITTLE BIT TROUBLESOME, BUT CONTACTING ME THIS WAY WILL BE MUCH MORE COVERT...

DEPENDING ON THE SITUATION, THE PROPER WAY TO CONTACT ME WILL BE DIFFERENT.

ALSO... SOUICHI-SAMA.

A DIRECT METHOD OF CONTACT WILL BE RISKY.

IT MAKES ME BLUSH.

WHEN I IMAGINE EVERYONE KNOWING ABOUT IT

HU HU...

PLEASE KEEP IT A SECRET ABOUT ME BEING A PICTURE BOOK AUTHOR.

AH!!

AS I THOUGHT EBA HAS ALREADY

I SEE.

HMM~ IS THAT A PICTURE BOOK OR SOMETHING?

THE PRINCE BEE...?

I'VE HEARD OF THAT PICTURE BOOK BEFORE, NOW I REMEMBER IT.

AH, YES.

WAIT A SECOND.

I'VE NEVER HEARD OF IT, I GUESS WE DON'T HAVE IT.

PHEW, THAT WAS CLOSE.

I THINK IT'LL ARRIVE IN 2 OR 3 DAYS...

HERE, PLEASE FILL OUT THIS ORDER FORM.

IT'S FROM A LONG TIME AGO, SO I FORGOT. AND I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYONE EVER ORDER IT.

……

和向奴書房

IT WAS CALLED A "PROMISE" BEFORE. IT WAS A CHEAP ACT USED FOR WINNING THE ELECTION.

EVERYONE, DO YOU STILL REMEMBER IT?

たはら

THINGS THAT HAPPEN TWICE WILL HAPPEN A THIRD TIME.

WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE WILL HAPPEN AGAIN.

ALTHOUGH IT'S CALLED A "MANIFESTO" NOW THE SAME THING KEEPS HAPPENING.

IF YOU DO THAT, YOU MAY NOTICE THAT THE THINGS HAPPENING RIGHT NOW

ARE NOT HAPPENING FOR THE FIRST TIME.

OBSERVE YOUR SURROUN-DINGS CLOSELY.

BUT THEY'VE IN FACT HAPPENED BEFORE.

和尼

NAGANO
1998

GAME BOY

YOU JUST DON'T GIVE UP, DO YOU?

I TOLD YOU YOU CAN'T HAVE IT.

THIS IS FATE, I'LL GET IT NO MATTER WHAT.

…

5の王子さま

I'VE NEVER THOUGHT THAT I'D FIND THE MYTHICAL "THE PRINCE BEE" IN THIS BOOKSTORE I RANDOMLY WALKED IN.

I KNOW THIS IS A LOT TO ASK,

BUT I WON'T GIVE UP SO EASILY... BECAUSE,

I

EXCUSE ME,

I'M THE HACHINA WHO ORDERED "THE PRINCE BEE" 3 DAYS AGO.

I CAN'T SELL IT TO YOU.

I TOLD YOU THIS PICTURE BOOK WAS ORDERED BY SOMEONE ELSE.

PLEASE WAIT FOR A MINUTE... I'LL DEAL WITH THIS ANNOYING GUY RIGHT NOW.

AH... YES, IT HAS.

!

THE BOOK HAS ARRIVED?

LEAN

.....

SORRY,

THAT PICTURE BOOK WAS ORDERED BY ME.

の王子さま

.....

HEY...

*"BEE" IN JAPANESE IS "HACHI".

OH~?

THE ONE WHO ORDERED THE MYTHICAL PICTURE BOOK, "THE PRINCE BEE", IS NAMED *HACHINA... HOW NIFTY.

WHAT'S YOUR FIRST NAME? CAN YOU TELL ME, IF YOU DON'T MIND?

HACHI-
NA...

NAOKI.

WHOSE WORDS ARE WORTH BELIEV ING?

NOW IS THE TIME TO ABANDON THE OBSOLETE POLITICS.

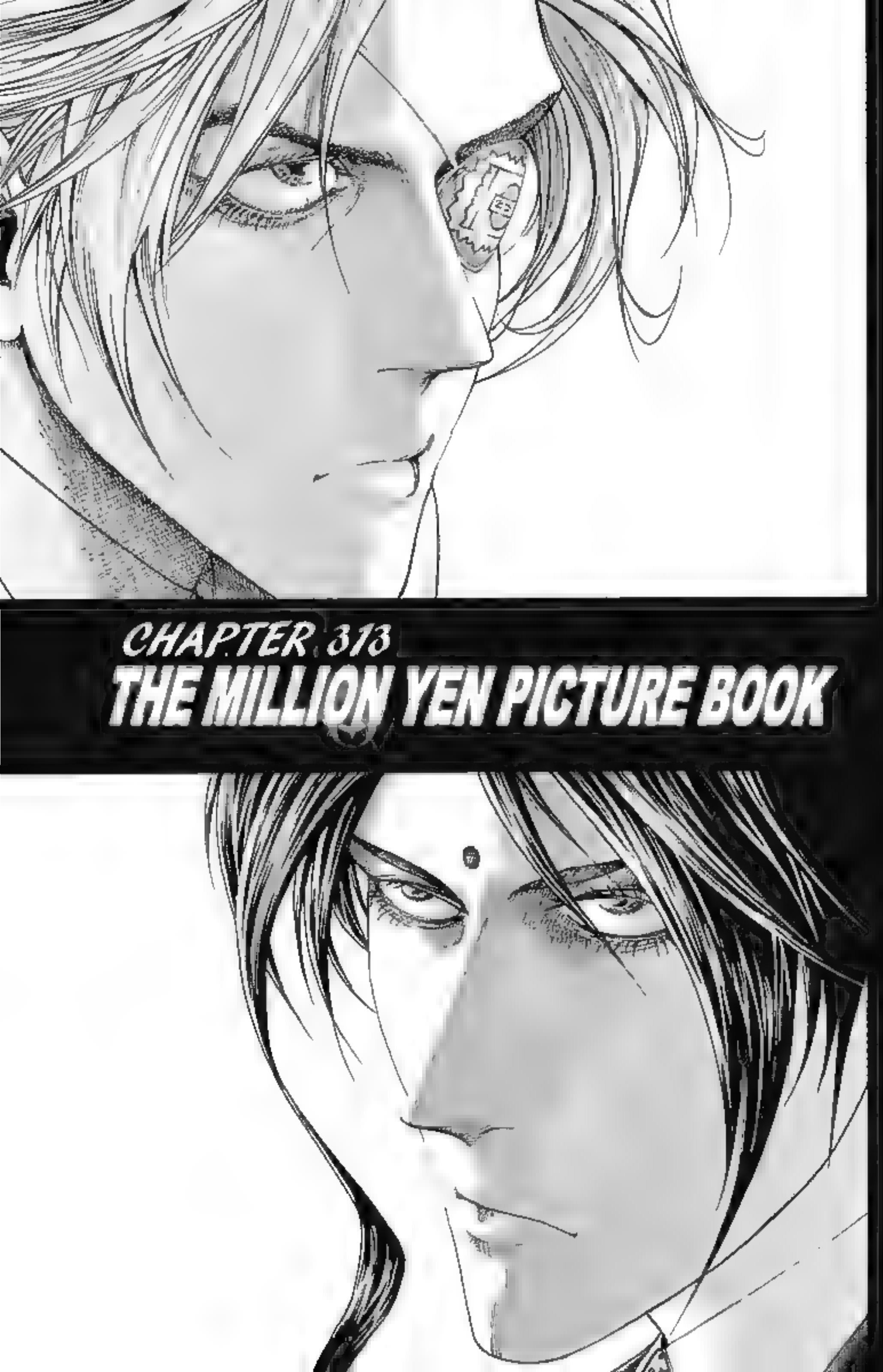
PUTS BACK

...SO,

WHO ARE YOU THEN?

BAKU.

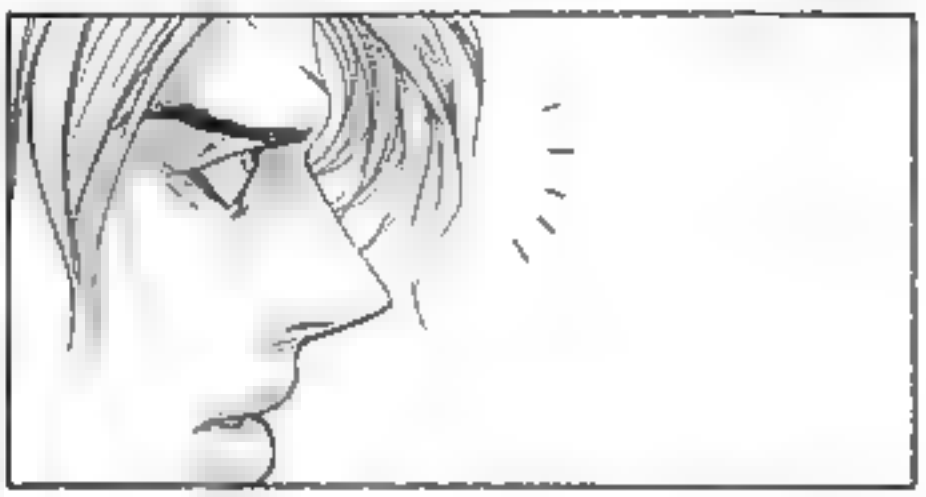
MADARA-ME...



CHAPTER 313
THE MILLION YEN PICTURE BOOK

YOUR EYE PATCH LOOKS SPECIAL...
WHERE DID YOU GET IT?
LET ME SQUEEZE BY, PLEASE.

Y-YOU...



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和向奴書房

MADARAME BAKU-SAN...

THEN...

YOU HEARD THAT, DIDN'T YOU?

DON'T PLAY DUMB~

HA!

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW...

I WANT THAT PICTURE BOOK NO MATTER WHAT.

THE RIGHT TO BUY THAT BOOK?

WELL... I WON'T ASK YOU TO GIVE IT TO ME FOR FREE.

SO, CAN YOU GIVE ME...

.....

HOLD ON... WAIT A SECOND.

NAH,

1.

IT'S TOO SIMPLE TO MERELY BUY IT... HOW ABOUT...

WE PLAY A GAME...

GIVE ME 1 MILLION YEN RIGHT NOW, THEN I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU.

WHAT GAME IS IT?

1?

IF YOU CAN'T, JUST GIVE IT UP.

I NEED THAT BOOK TOO.

IF YOU WANT IT THAT BAD,

1...

MILLION YEN...

OH.

HERE WE GO!! RADIO PIKA☆PIKA!! TODAY'S GUESTS ARE...

MADARAME BAKU-SAN.

SORRY ...

WELL THEN,

LET ME SQUEEZE BY, PLEASE.

IT'S A DEAL.

AND IT'S OVER.

……

FLIP

WHAT... WHAT SHOULD I SAY..

GU...

MU...

OLD MAN, YOU HEARD THAT TOO, RIGHT? SELL ME THE BOOK NOW.

MY RETREAT MADE YOU BELIEVE MORE IN THAT

SO I STOPPED TALKING ABOUT MONEY, AND TRIED TO PROPOSE A GAME.

YOU...

NOW...

LET ME CHANGE THE TOPIC.

"THIS MAN DOESN'T HAVE 1 MILLION YEN ON HIM"...

APPRAISED MY OUTFIT IN AN INSTANT, DIDN'T YOU?

HOW ABOUT YOU? WHY DO YOU WANT THIS PICTURE BOOK? TO SEND IT TO SOMEONE AS A GIFT?

WELL, IN MY CASE, I JUST LIKE TO COLLECT RARE GOODS.

.....

YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE A PERSON WHO LIKES TO READ PICTURE BOOKS... WELL, MOST PEOPLE ARE LIKE THAT EXCEPT CHILDREN.

WHY DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU COULD ORDER IT IN THIS OLD BOOKSTORE LOCATED IN A SMALL CORNER IN THIS TOWN~?

BUT WHY?

ALSO, THIS MYTHICAL BOOK, "THE PRINCE BEE", IS A BOOK THAT CAN'T BE FOUND ANYWHERE ELSE.

IS THIS BOOK?

WHAT EXACTLY

PLEASE COME TO

COME...

MY PLACE...

THAT'S...

.....

2

WITHOUT LETTING ANYONE NOTICE

WHEN YOU FEEL THAT YOU'VE LOST YOUR MEMORY AGAIN..

SO,

BUT GETTING IT THIS WAY IS NOT SATISFYING ...

GOOD.

ONLY SOMETHING LIKE THAT IS WORTH GETTING.

SEEMS LIKE

THERE'S A HIDDEN STORY.

DECIDE IT WITH A BET?

HOW ABOUT WE STILL

IT HAPPENS THAT WE'RE IN A BOOKSTORE, SO HOW ABOUT THIS?

WE PICK A BOOK IN THE STORE, AND TAKE IT TO THE OLD MAN.

IF WE CHOOSE TOGETHER WE'LL PROBABLY CHOOSE THE SAME BOOK.

EACH OF US HAS 5 MINUTES TO CHOOSE A BOOK, SOUND GOOD?

RIGHT ...

SURE.

ROCK PAPER SCISSORS?

THAT'S A BIT...

AH... HOW ABOUT...

WHAT ABOUT THE TURNS?

THE ONE WHO

THEN THE OLD MAN WILL JUDGE ITS VALUE.

PICKS THE HIGHER-PRICED BOOK WINS.

WE CLOSE OUR EYES AND OPEN THIS BOOK. THE ONE WHOSE PAGE NUMBER IS CLOSER TO THE NUMBER THAT THE OLD MAN CALLS WINS,

AND HE CAN CHOOSE A BOOK FIRST.

SINCE WE'RE IN A BOOKSTORE, LET'S DECIDE IT WITH A BOOK.

I, KONDOU MASAHIKO,

WILL PRESIDE THIS GAMBLE!!

ALTHOUGH I WANT TO SAY THAT, IF YOU BOTH WANT TO DO IT, THERE'S NO PROBLEM!

HOW IS IT...? CAN YOU HELP US, OLD MAN?

NO!

THAT'S THE RULE...

A BOOK CAN ONLY BE SOLD TO THE ONE WHO ORDERS IT.

TWISTED SPIRIT

THE GAMBLE STARTS!

PAGE NUMBER,

105!

嘘吐いた。

1 MILLION YOU GAVE ME JUST NOW,

THE

.....

ONLY HAS 99 BILLS.

IT

ｸｽｯ

……

……

形の木
記録や
用され
た。
の八行の音
音に変化する
ヒ(貝)→カヰ

CHAPTER 314
"REFEREE" MASAHIKO

NOW,

IT'S YOUR TURN, BAKU-SAN.

AN EXACT MATCH!?

パラ

WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY IT IMMEDIATELY?

IF YOU KNEW THERE WERE ONLY 99 BILLS IN THE BATCH,

HACHINA NAOKI,

.....

QUITE NOBLE, HUH... IT'S VERY GOOD~

YOUR FAILURE... "THE AMOUNT OF THE MONEY ITSELF DOESN'T MATTER".

YET, YOU STILL ACCEPTED IT.

IF YOU DID SO, THEN THERE WOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN ANY NEED FOR THIS GAMBLE.

THAT KIND OF THINKING ...

COULD NOT FORGIVE YOURSELF FOR HAVING BEEN PLAYED A FOOL BY ME, IN OTHER WORDS, YOU ACCEPTED...

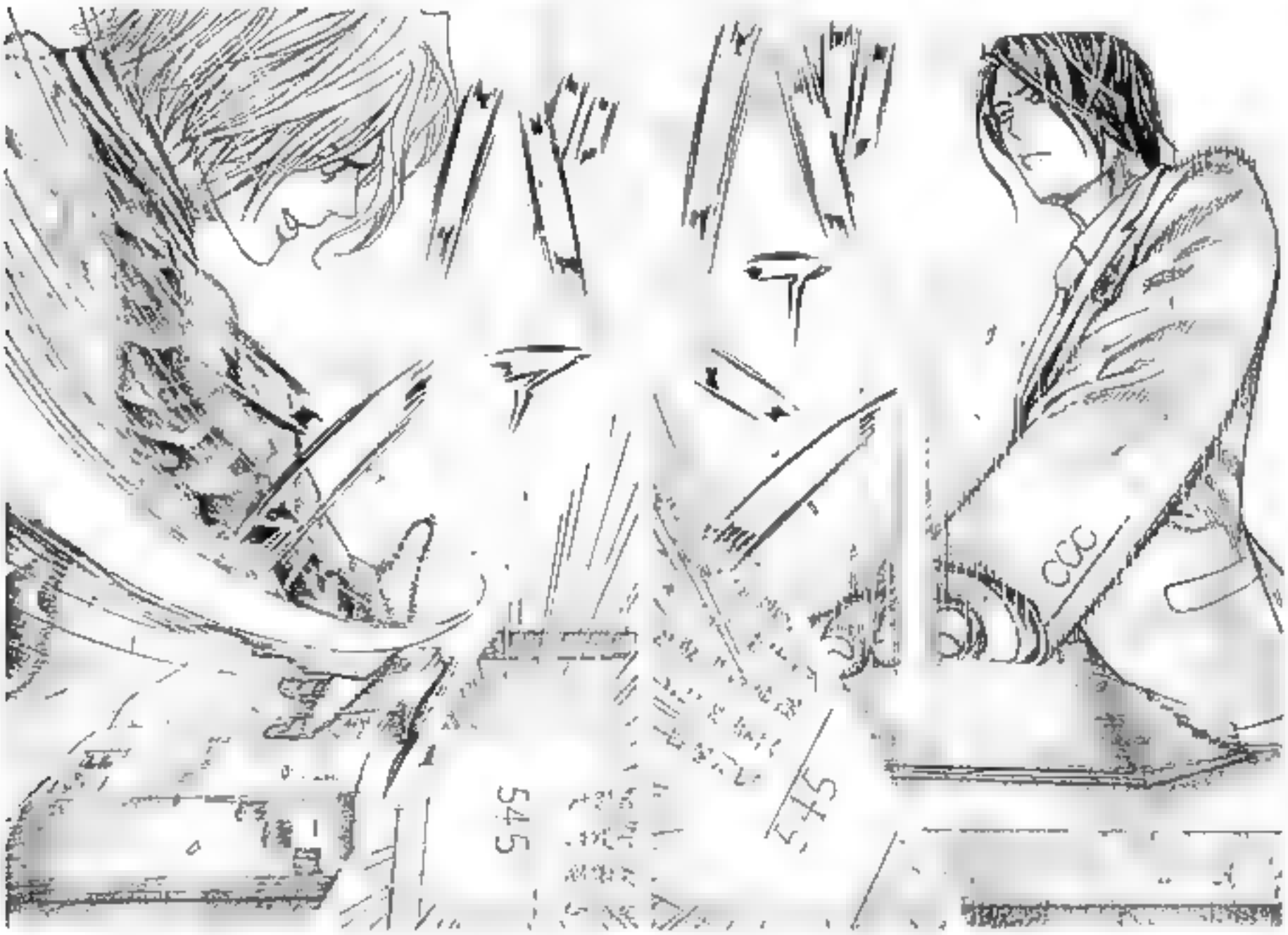
YOU

REALLY

PISSES ME OFF...

105

NE-
NEXT,
PAGE
545!!
WHAT ARE THESE KIDS. ? WHAT KIND OF SENSITIVITY DRIVES THEIR FINGERS SO PRECISELY!?
TI...
TIE...


545
545

嘘吐い㉑。

A STRANGE MAN WHO SUDDENLY APPEARED IN FRONT OF HIS EYES,

WAS ALSO PROPOSED BY THIS MYSTERIOUS MAN...

MOREOVER, THIS GAMBLE OF CHOOSING A BOOK...

CARRYING WITH HIM SUCH AN UNBELIEVABLY LARGE SUM THAT SEEMS TOO LARGE IF WE WERE TO JUDGE FROM HIS AGE OR LOOKS...

YOU FLIPPED IT TOO HARD

IF WE KEEP GOING LIKE THIS, THE BOOK WILL BE DAMAGED WITHOUT EVER REACHING A CONCLUSION.

♪RU RURU RU-

HE CANNOT ALLOW THAT TO HAPPEN...

IT'S NORMAL TO FEAR THAT IF THIS MAN WERE TO GO FIRST, THE MOST EXPENSIVE BOOK WOULD BE TAKEN.

HOW ABOUT THIS?

♪HE IS- THE LOVER OF A CUTE CAT♪

351!!

687!!

I HAVE A PROPOSAL.

GOT IT.

AND YOU TWO HAVE TO GUESS THE CORRECT PAGE BY LISTENING TO THE SOUND.

THIS TIME, I'LL BE THE ONE TO GO THROUGH THE BOOK.

READY!

ALRIGHT,

ANSWER NOW! THE VICTORY GOES TO THE FASTEST!

STOP

371.

381.

OH!

SO... WHO IS...

THIS IS QUITE HARD, ISN'T IT?

OH!! A DIFFE-RENT RESULT!

THE GAPS ARE REALLY CLOSE, BUT THE CLOSER ONE IS

PAGE 377!!

PAGE 381!!

LUCKY~

AHA!

IT'S OF COURSE IMPOSSIBLE TO CHECK ALL OF THE BOOKS DURING THAT TIME...

THERE'S NO OTHER CHOICE BUT TO TARGET A NARROWED CHOICE OF GENRES.

THE ALLOWED TIME IS

5 MINUTES ...

IN OTHER WORDS, INCLUDING THE TIME HE ALSO SPENDS CHOOSING THE BOOK,

I'VE BEEN GRANTED 10 MINUTES.

...

THE ALLOWED TIME IS 5 MINUTES...

FINDING THE HIGHEST PRICED BOOK WITHIN 5 MINUTES NEEDS VERY GOOD LUCK.

ON THE OTHER HAND, I HAVE MORE TIME TO THINK THOROUGHLY.

A GRAVURE BOOK AND

A DICTIONARY.

IT TOOK ME SOME TIME, BUT I FOUND THESE TWO BOOKS...

IS A REPRINT EDITION OF A DICTIONARY FROM THE MEIJI ERA. ITS VALUE WAS ALREADY QUITE HIGH FROM THE BEGINNING SINCE IT'S A RARE EDITION, AND IS WAY MORE PRECIOUS TO RESEARCHERS AND PROFESSORS.

ON THE OTHER HAND, THIS DICTIONARY...

AT FIRST GLANCE, THIS GRAVURE IDOL MIGHT LOOK LIKE AN UNKNOWN AMATEUR, BUT THIS IS ACTUALLY A SEMI-NUDE GRAVURE BOOK OF THE FAMOUS ACTRESS, KOSAKAI IZUMI, BEFORE SHE STARTED BEING EMPLOYED BY HER CURRENT AGENCY...

SO EVEN IF IT IS A RARE EDITION, IT IS QUITE DOUBTFUL THAT IT BEARS A HIGH VALUE...

THE GRAVURE IDOL PICTURE BOOK WAS LEFT CARELESSLY IN THE BOOK CART.

ITS BINDING IS ALSO NOT VERY GOOD.

IS QUITE DAMAGED.

AND SOME BOOK STAMPS WERE LEFT ON IT.

TH-THIS DICTION-ARY...!

FIRST IS... THIS BOOK...

I'M REALLY PRESSED FOR TIME NOW, WHAT SHOULD I DO!?

SHOULD I KEEP EVALUATING THE VALUE OF THESE TWO BOOKS... OR SHOULD I LOOK FOR A NEW ONE...!?

NO MORE TIME LEFT...

HUH?

WHERE DID HE GO?

YOU CAN'T JUST CHOOSE "THE PRINCE BEE" AND SAY "ITS VALUE IS 1 MILLION YEN".

IT IS EXACTLY AS YOU SAID...

PICK

NO NO. IT'S NOT LIKE THAT-

SUCH INDISCRE-TION.

THE HIGHEST VALUED ONE WAS "GOTOKU" BY GOTOU YUKIYO, ITS BOOK BINDING IS *THREE GILDED. IT ALL DEPENDS ON WHETHER I CAN FIND IT DURING THE TIME OR NOT.

MIKOSHIBA SHOBOU ANTIQUE BOOKS CATALOGUE

*GOTOKU

HERE IT IS!

//

I HAVE MEMORIZED ALL ITS CONTENTS.

I HAVE HEARD THAT SOME OLD BOOKSTORES DO WRITE SUCH CATALOGUES WHEN COMES THE NEED TO PRESENT ANY RARE BOOKS THEY POSSESS.

AS I THOUGHT, THAT'S THE ANTIQUE BOOKS CATALOGUE.

*"SANBOUKIN", A JAPANESE BOOKBINDING TECHNIQUE.

愚匿

人間墜落

指

大台

ズ

ロロ

ロ

AND THE BOOK'S CONDITION IS STILL QUITE NICE.

THERE ARE NO BOOK STAMPS.

MOREOVER, A THREE GILDED BOOK BINDING... THIS IS THE ONE!!

FOUND IT.

AH!

OH?

OH!

CRAP...

I'M TALKING ABOUT A WHOLE DIFFERENT MATTER!! THIS IS NOT INDISCRETION!!

MAYBE, THAT IS TRUE BUT,

PEEK

.....

IT WAS REALLY WORTH IT, MAKING A BET AT THE END OF THE TIME FOR A NEW BOOK...

AND...

I'LL HAVE TO BE CAREFUL OF HIGH PLACES.

LUCK IS REALLY IMPORTANT, ISN'T IT?

NO, I'M LUCKY.

I'M SORRY ...

THAT SUCH A NICE PERSON WAS DOWN HERE.

BUT, A MATCH IS A MATCH.

I'M SO LUCKY,

I REALLY DON'T KNOW HOW THIS FALL WOULD HAVE DAMAGED THE BOOK.

I'LL WIN WITHOUT HESITATION.

NEXT!!

IT'S TIME!!

TIME FOR YOU TO CHOOSE!!

THIS IS TOTALLY A SAD EVENT... AFTER ALL, I WAS A BIG FAN OF HER!

I'M TELLING YOU! THE PASSING OF KOSAKAI IZUMI DURING HER MEDICAL TREATMENT

AND,

I COULD HEAR "THAT" AT THE COUNTER.

YOU, TAKING AWAY THAT BOOK FROM ME.

THE MINUS POINT OF BEING SECOND TO CHOOSE IS...

WAS THAT I HAD THE TIME TO SEE VARIOUS BOOKS ...INCLUDING THE TWO BOOKS THAT YOU CHOSE AT THE BEGINNING.

WHAT BECAME A PLUS HOWEVER

QUITE IRONICALLY, WITH HER DEATH, THIS BOOK'S VALUE...

A SEMI-NUDE PICTURE BOOK TITLED "SEA PARADISE" THAT IS WHAT I AM TALKING ABOUT NOW GOT IT?

BUT, THIS IS ANOTHER MATTER.

THE BOOK WHERE SHE APPEARED AS TANATA.

A PREMIUM BOOK, WITH AN EVEN MORE IMPORTANT VALUE BOOST... THIS IS BECOMING SUCH A CRAZY STORY! SOMEONE PLEASE GIVE IT TO MEEEE~

HAS BECOME EXTREEE-EEEMELY HIGH.

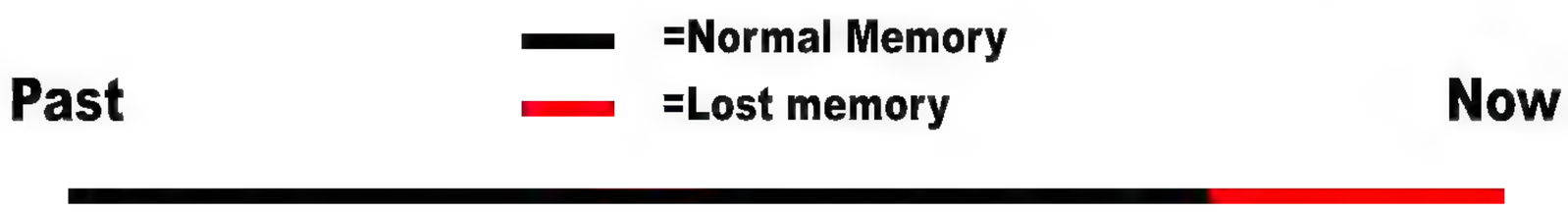
TO BE HONEST, EVEN I CAN'T TELL WHICH ONE IS MORE EXPENSIVE... NO, I SHOULD SAY...

HA... HAHA...

WHICH ONE IS LUCKIER.

How does Souichi's memory loss work?

1. He loses a continuous stretch of memory from the current time.



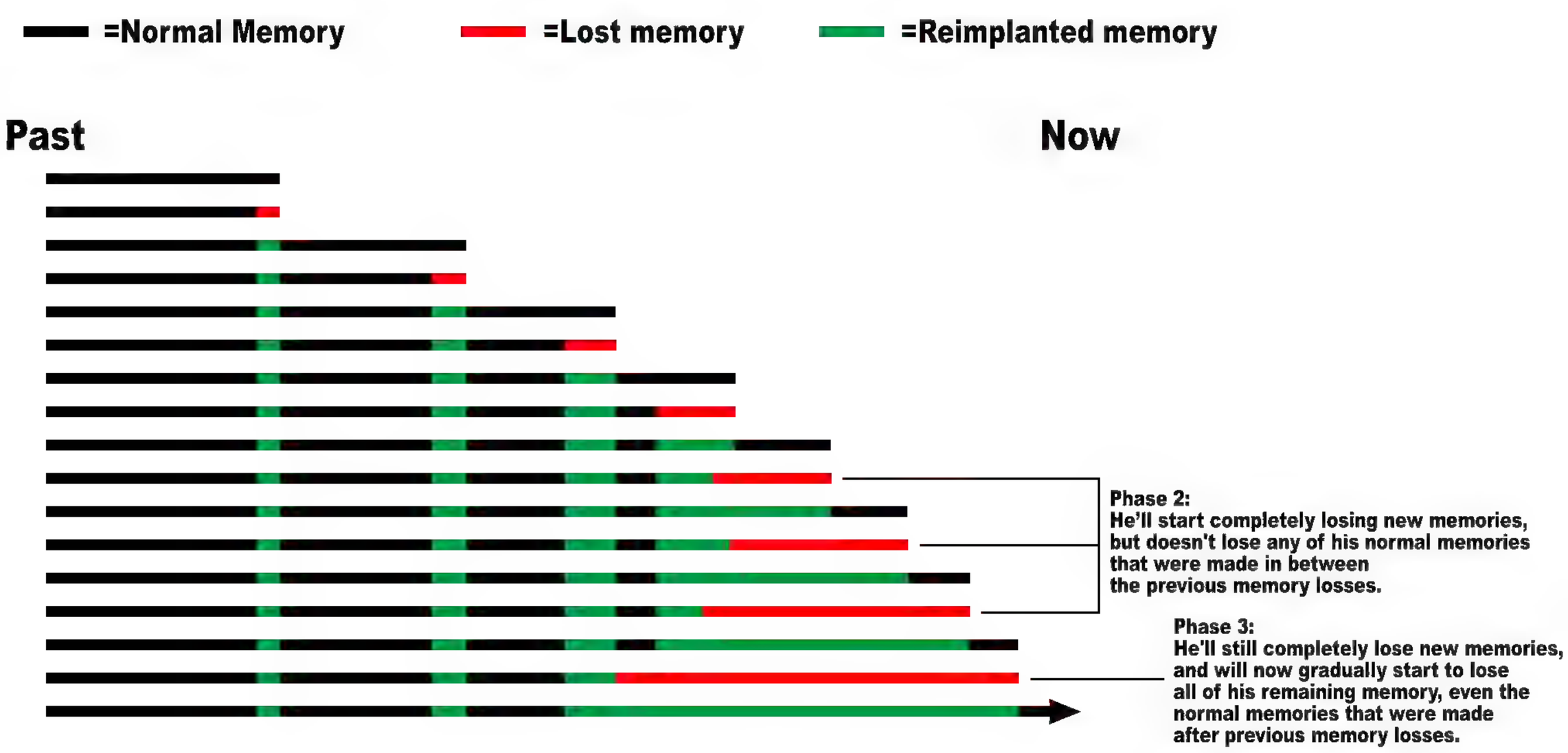
The cases that won't happen:

1) Losing memory from the middle.

2) Losing segmented stretches of memory at a time.

2. The stretch of memory lost becomes longer each time, and the memory losses become more and more frequent.

So Souichi's memory should function like this:


=Normal Memory
=Lost memory
=Reimplanted memory
Past
Now
Phase 2:
He'll start completely losing new memories, but doesn't lose any of his normal memories that were made in between the previous memory losses.
Phase 3:
He'll still completely lose new memories, and will now gradually start to lose all of his remaining memory, even the normal memories that were made after previous memory losses.

3. The memory loss this time is a special case where Souichi lost his memory to the point of after Eba's promise, but before his death.

About 1 hour
Unknown number of years
The first discovered memory loss and Eba's promise(Ch.271)
Eba's death (unknown time)
The tower incident

CHAPTER 315

MASAHIKO'S JUDGEMENT

愚匿

"GOTOKU" IS THE REPRESENTATIVE BOOK OF GOTOU YUKIYO, A FAMOUS WRITER OF THE MEIJI ERA. THE BOOK BINDING IS A PERFECT "SANBOUKIN", GILDING THE BOOK'S HEAD, FORE EDGE, AND THE TAIL WITH GOLD POWDER, IN ORDER TO REPEL DIRT AND INSECT DAMAGE. MOST LIKELY A LIMITED EDITION. INDEED, ITS CIRCULATION AT THE TIME WAS ALREADY QUITE LOW, AND IT'S QUITE PROBABLE THAT THIS IS ONE OF THE LAST REMAINING ONES IN THIS GOOD OF A CONDITION. GOTOU YUKIYO STILL HAS MANY FANS IN THIS PERIOD, SO THIS BOOK IS WANTED BY MANY COLLECTORS.

MADARAME BAKU

AT FIRST GLANCE, THIS GRAVURE BOOK, "SEA PARADISE", MIGHT LOOK LIKE IT FEATURES AN UNKNOWN AMATEUR, BUT, THE TRUTH IS, IT'S A SEMI-NUDE GRAVURE BOOK OF THE FAMOUS ACTRESS KOSAKAI IZUMI, BEFORE SHE STARTED BEING EMPLOYED BY HER CURRENT AGENCY. IT WASN'T TALKED ABOUT MUCH WHEN IT WAS FIRST PUBLISHED, AND ONLY A FEW EDITIONS ARE REMAINING. FANS SOON RUMORED IT AS "THE MYTHICAL SEMI NUDE GRAVURE BOOK", AND ITS VALUE ROSE WITH KOSAKAI'S FAME. DUE TO HER SUDDEN DEATH, ITS VALUE HAS BEEN UPGRADED EVEN FURTHER.

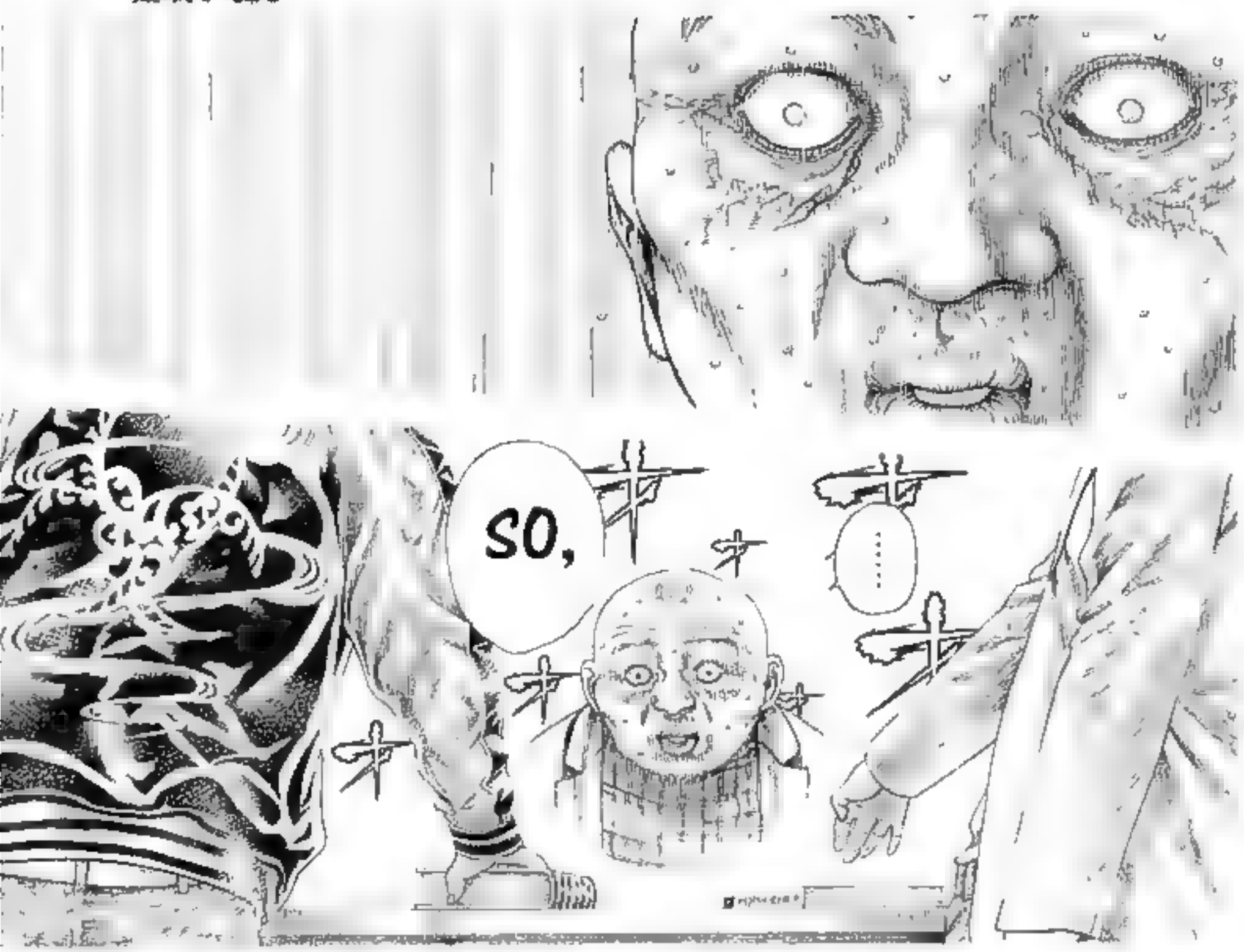
HACHIWA NAOKI

A GRAVURE BOOK OF THE GREAT BREAST MISSION'S LEADING ACTOR, TANATA

A BOTTOMLESS PURENESS

SHUEISHA

嘘吐い㉕。



THE OLD MAN DISPLAYS THE BOOKS BASED ON THEIR VALUE.... IN OTHER WORDS,

THERE IS NO WAY A HIGHLY VALUED BOOK WOULD HAVE BEEN PLACED THERE.

THIS GRAVURE BOOK WAS LEFT CARELESSLY IN THE BOOK CART.

THIS GUY MADE A HUGE MISTAKE.

IN OTHER WORDS, BY LEAVING IT IN SUCH A PLACE...

WRONG. THE REASON FOR WHICH THE GRAVURE BOOK WAS LEFT CARELESSLY ON THE WAGON IS ONLY DUE TO THE PLAYFUL MIND OF THE STORE OWNER. HE WANTED TO ENTERTAIN THE CLIENTS BY LETTING THEM GUESS THE VALUE BY THEMSELVES.

THERE IS NO BOOK HERE

WHOSE VALUE I CANNOT EVALUATE!!

OF COURSE, I KNOW IT. THE VALUES OF ALL THE BOOKS IN MY STORE, ARE WRITTEN DOWN ALL OVER IN MY HEAD.

!!

YE- YES! THAT'S IT!

HE WANTED TO HAVE THEM PLAY AT LOOKING FOR TREASURE, ISN'T THAT RIGHT?

OH... SO, HOW MUCH YEN IS IT WORTH?

UH.

TELL US, QUICKLY.

YES,

LIKE I SAID,

I WONDER WHAT SHE WANTS? I'LL BE BACK SOON!

MY WIFE IS CALLING ME!

OH!

SO,

.....

HOW MUCH? JUST FOR REFERENCE.

RIGHT NOW, THAT BOOK HAS REACHED A TREMENDOUS VALUE, GRANDPA~

SIGH~ GRANDPA, SERIOUSLY?

I AM NOT A BIG FAN OF THESE KINDS OF BOOKS, SO...

WE CAN FIND IT ON THE MARKET NOW AT AROUND...

LET'S SAY ITS CONDITION IS GOOD AND STILL HAS ITS WRAP-AROUND BAND

100...

THOU-SAND... YEN...

100 THOUSAND YEN.

GOTOKU
悪国
九千円
90 THOUSAND YEN
GOTOU YUKI
五島雪
五千円

TANATA
A GRAVURE BOOK OF THE GREAT BREAST MISSION'S LEADING ACTOR, TANATA
A BOTTOMLESS PURENESS
SHUEISHA

I JUST KEEP HEARING THESE STRANGE VOICES RECENTLY... ANYWAY,
MY DECISION IS...
I JUST REMEMBERED THAT MY WIFE LEFT THIS WORLD LAST YEAR.
SORRY FOR MAKING YOU WAIT...

THIS GAMBLE,

THE WINNER IS

GOTOKU!

AND MY PRIDE AS AN OLD BOOK-STORE OWNER.

BETWEEN, NOT WANTING TO LET THIS KIND OF GUY WIN.

HEHE.

YOU STILL HAVE TO PAY FOR IT...

HEY.. THE PICTURE BOOK'S COST.

I STILL HAVE MIXED FEELINGS ABOUT THIS.

KARIUME

IF IT HAD BEEN CLEAN, THE RESULT WOULD HAVE BEEN REVERSED.

THE REASON I PUSHED FOR THE GOTOKU S VICTORY WAS DUE TO THE "WRAP-AROUND BAND" OF THE GRAVURE BOOK.

THERE WAS SOME DUBIOUS GRAFFITI WRITTEN BEHIND IT.

WHAT A LUCKY KID.

BECOMING SUDDENLY LESS WORTHY THAN A SIMPLE GRAVURE BOOK WHICH JUST HAPPENED TO INCREASE ITS VALUE. THIS IS A MATTER OF SELF DIGNITY FOR MY STORE.

THE MOST EXPENSIVE ANTIQUE BOOK, HIGHLY VALUED IN TERMS OF FINANCIAL AND CULTURAL VALUE, IN MY STORE,

A DIFFERENCE OF 10,000 WAS ENOUGH TO RENDER ME HESITANT.

HOWEVER, I CANNOT MAKE A BOOK WIN WHEN ITS VALUE IS SO SHARPLY LOWER FROM THE OTHER, JUST ON THE LOGIC OF "ME BEING THE ONE TO DECIDE THE VALUE OF MY BOOKS".

OR IS IT...? NO WAY...

AREN'T YOU BEING PETTY?

AH!

STOP FOLLOW-ING ME...

NOW I WON'T LET YOU READ IT FOR SURE.

OH REALLY?

I'M NOT FOLLOWING YOU. IT JUST HAPPENS THAT WE'RE GOING IN THE SAME DIRECTION.

YOU'RE SO PERSISTENT. "JUST LET ME READ IT?" YOU SAY? ...NO WAY, BECAUSE YOU LOST.

I'M THE TYPE OF GUY WHO CANNOT FORGIVE SOMEONE READING THE BOOK I BOUGHT BEFORE ME.

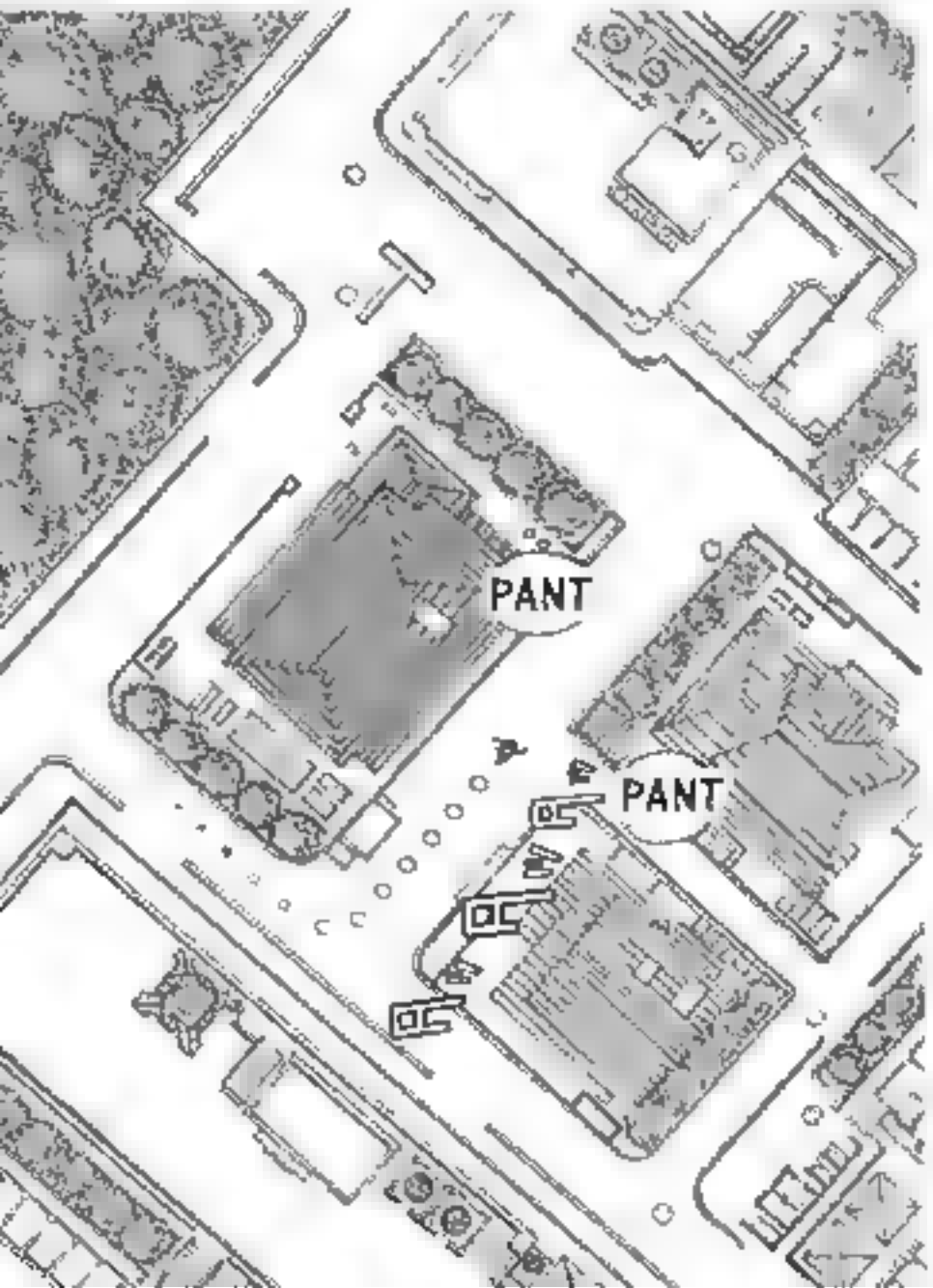
I'LL READ IT QUIETLY AFTER GETTING BACK HOME.

ISN'T THAT CHEATING?!

?

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

THAT WRAP-AROUND BAND...


PANT
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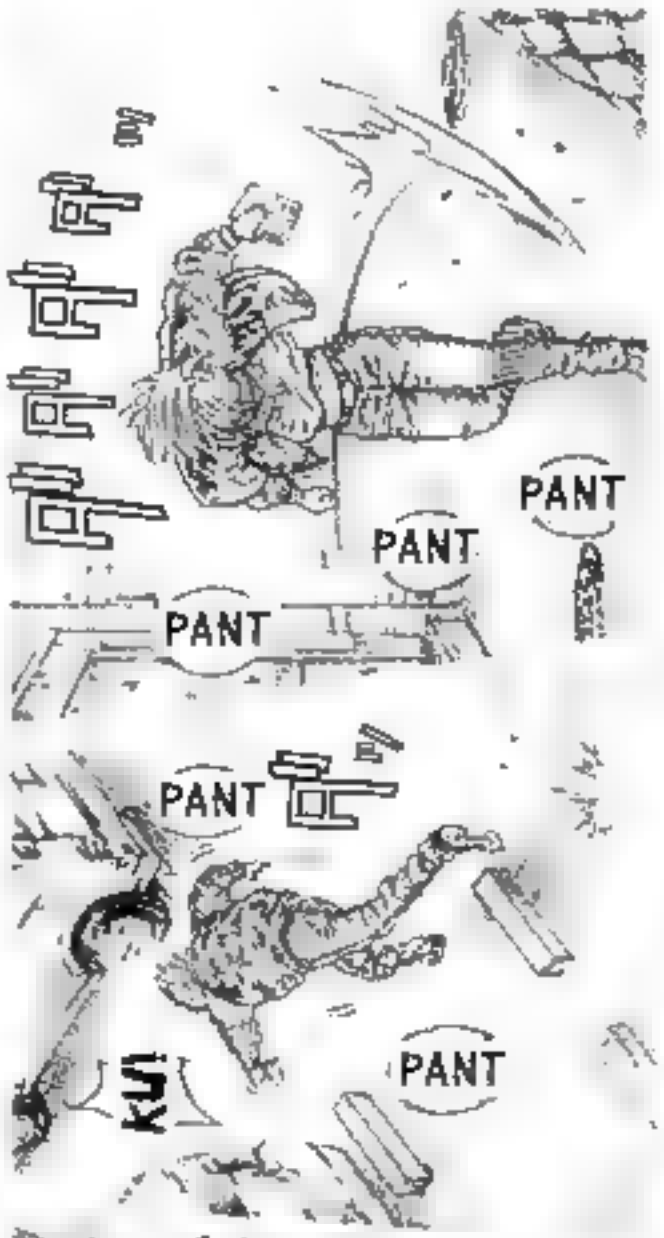
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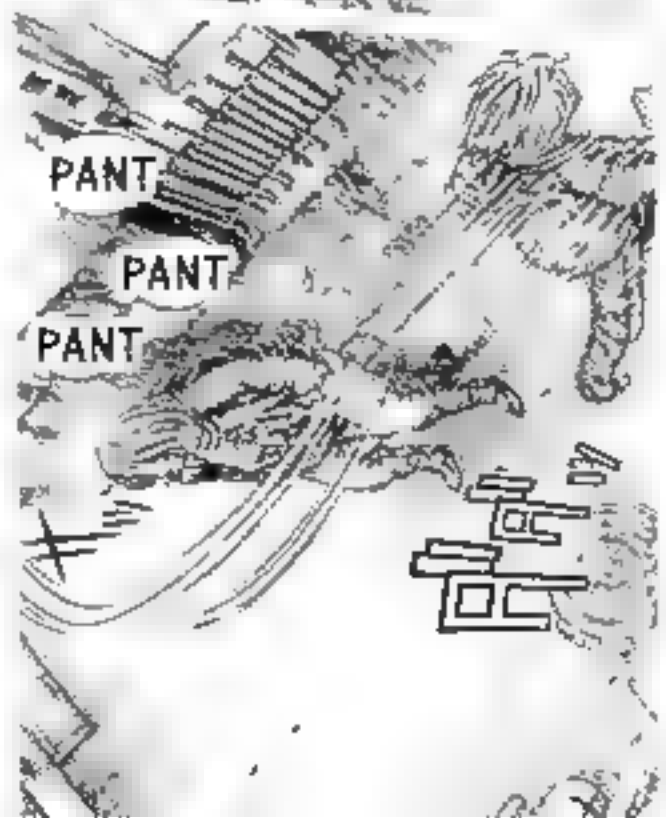
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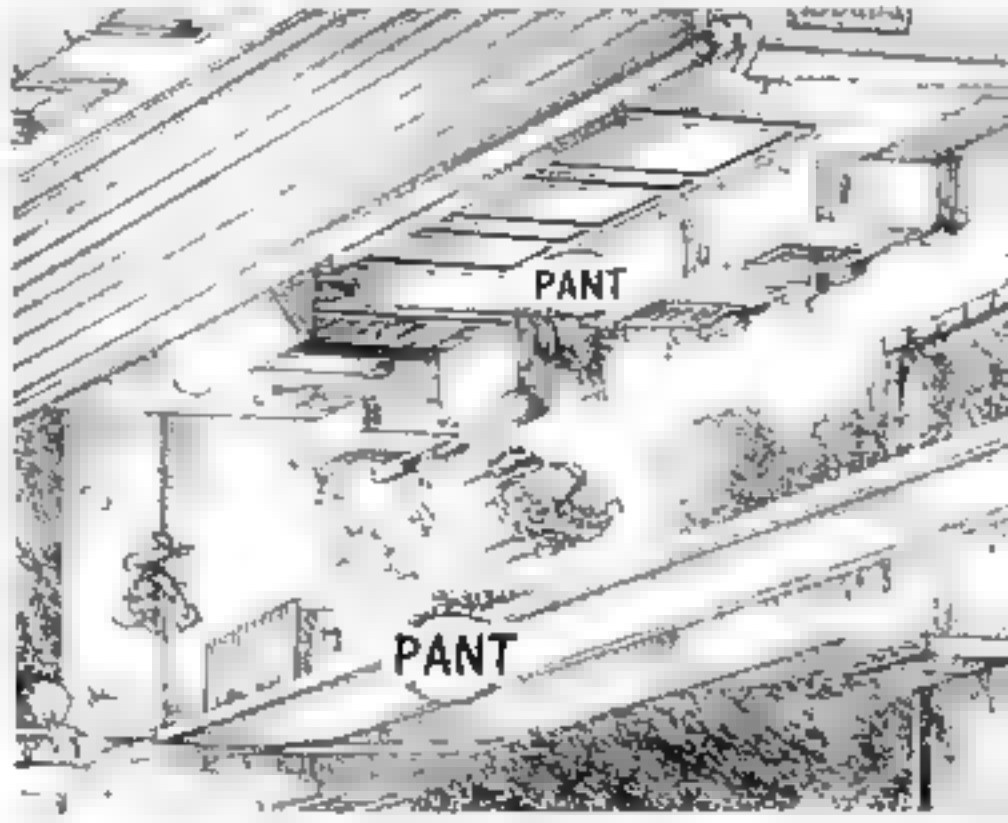
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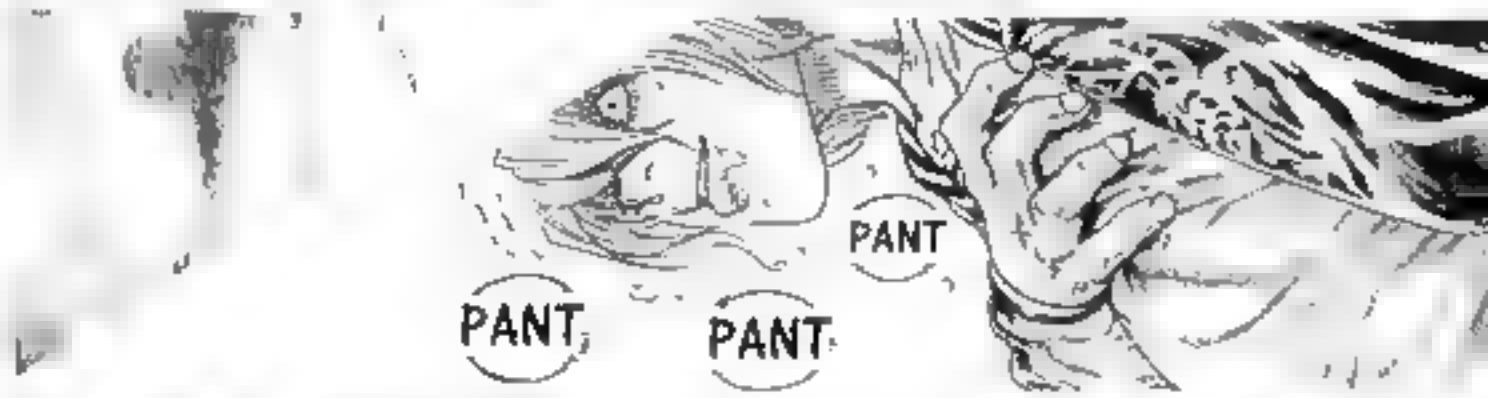
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...HEY,
.....
WHY DID YOU START RUNNING ALL OF A SUDDEN?

THIS IS THE BOOK I WON.

I'M NOT THINKING ABOUT STEALING IT FROM YOU.

OR ELSE, I'LL HAVE TO BECOME SERIOUS TOO.

YOU'D BETTER NOT COME CLOSER.

ALTHOUGH THIS WILL ONLY LAST UNTIL THE BOOK ARRIVES.

THE BOOKSTORE OWNER TOLD ME HE'D ORDER IT FOR ME AGAIN.

THAT PICTURE BOOK,

I WONDER WHAT THIS FEELING IS...

UNTIL YOU SHOW ME THAT BOOK,

I WILL NOT LEAVE YOUR SIDE, BAKU-SAN.

EXCUSE ME,

I'M THE HACHINA WHO ORDERED "THE PRINCE BEE".

AH! WOULD YOU LIKE TO PLACE ANOTHER ORDER?

WELL~ IT HAS NOT ARRIVED YET, YOU SEE. I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED?

AH~

YEAH~

!!

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

YES, YES. I REMEMBER. . IT'S A PICTURE BOOK, RIGHT?

AH!!

THAT MONEY AND WRAPPING PAPER IN YOUR HANDS, WHAT ARE THEY?

THEN, MAYBE I ALSO MADE THAT KIND OF MISTAKE. TOTALLY TOTALLY WITHOUT ME KNOWING IT? PROBABLY?

YEAH. WE HEAR A LOT ABOUT THAT KIND OF MISTAKE

AH~

SOLD THE BOOK I ORDERED TO ANOTHER CLIENT, WHO BOUGHT IT FOR THIS JUICY AMOUNT OF MONEY?

PORN. IT'S PORN. HAHA! JUST "PORN AND MONEY"

AH~

THIS!? WELL, THIS IS. . HOW SHOULD I SAY...

IT'S MY PERSONAL STUFF.

DON'T TELL ME, YOU...

!

I DON'T KNOW WHY THE FUSS, BUT..

EXCUSE ME FOR INTERR-UPTING...

I AM THE ONE WHO BOUGHT THAT BOOK.

IT'S ALREADY MY BOOK NOW.

LET ME SQUEEZE BY, PLEASE.

PLEASE WAIT.

THIS BOOK WAS THE ONE I ORDERED.

EVEN IF YOU SAY SO... I'VE BOUGHT IT.

WHAT?

IF YOU REALLY WANT IT SO MUCH,
THERE'S NO OTHER WAY THAN WINNING IT BACK.

HEY, KAJI.

CHAPTER 316
THIS NAME AGAIN

HAVE A GIFT FOR YOU...

I

WHAT IS IT, CHISATO?

HEH ...

DON'T GO LOSING IT.

THIS.

HEH ...

SUCH A GOOD GIRL.

THE GOD OF DEATH.

HE IS

IN FACT ...

HELLO?

HELLO!?

AH!!

!?

THE PHONE!!

AN ALLURING
IGHT ATTRACT
MOTH, WHICH
FLIES
AROUND IT...

HE
SACRIFICED
ONE OF HIS
OMRADE'S LI
TO SAVE
HIMSELF!

WHEN DID I FALL ASLEEP...?

!!

MARCO, HAVE YOU SEEN MY PHONE?

KAJI,

SUCH A SHAME...

MA-

MARCO!?

THERE ARE TIMES LIKE THIS YOU KNOW.

MARCO REALLY TRIED HIS BEST BUT... SUCH A MYSTERIOUS ACCIDENT HAPPENED.

WHAT'S THIS SHEET OF PAPER?

BY THE WAY, MARCO,

WHERE IS BAKU SAN?

IT WAS ONLY SOME WATER, IT WAS STILL FIXABLE, WHY!?

WHO!?

WHO ASKED YOU TO REPAIR MY PHONE!?

.....

DAMN ...

IT'S QUITE A FEAT TO DISMANTLE IT TO SUCH EXTENT WITH THESE TOOLS ONLY

BY THE WAY,

THIS IS..

THIS DAY FINALLY CAME

THAT'S WHAT HE SAID.

A FEW DAYS AGO, BAKU-NIICHAN LOOKED AT THIS SHEET WITH SCARY EYES...

.....

BOOK-STORE WAKOUDO ...?

STORE WAKO

PRODUCT

NAME

PHONE NUMB

SORRY, KAJI,

MARCO REALLY TRIED HIS BEST TO BREAK YOUR PHONE..

WAIT, WHAT? HOLD ON, THAT'S STRANGE, RIGHT?

IT'S OKAY, MARCO ...

MARCO DOESN'T KNOW.

AND... WHERE'S HE NOW?

STORE WAKOUDO

ORDER FORM

No. 445

PRODUCT THE PRINCE BEE

NAME HACHI NA NAO KI 蜂名直器

PHONE NUMBER

AMOUNT 1

NOTE PICTURE BOOK

UNIT PRICE 2,700 YEN

PICK UP STORE

2,700 YEN FAX

SUBTOTAL (135 YEN) (CASH, CREDIT CARD)

TAX 2,835 YEN

TOTAL

HAVE TO PICK UP THE BOOK IN THE STORE

17 DAYS AFTER THE BOOK ARRIVES!

受 和向奴書房

NEW BOOK ANTIQUE IN STOCK OUT OF STOCK SPECIAL

御本人様控え

ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT HAVING A MATCH?

WINNING... IT BACK?

NO, THIS WOULD BE NOTHING BIG LIKE A MATCH, BUT,

I JUST THOUGHT IT'D BE ALRIGHT TO DECIDE IT WITH A GAME, IF YOU REALLY WANT THE BOOK SO MUCH. JUST A LITTLE GAME YOU KNOW...

THIS IS DANGEROUS,

BAKU-SAN.

.....

WHAT ARE YOU EXPECTING ...?

THERE'S NO GUARANTEE THAT THIS WILL GO LIKE THAT TIME.

THAT IS SOMETHING THAT YOU SHOULD ALREADY BE AWARE OF, BAKU-SAN.

THOSE WERE ONLY A SERIES OF EVENTS THAT HAPPENED, BECAUSE IT WAS THAT TIME.

THE GAMBLE OF BACK THEN, ITS RESULT, AND WHAT HAPPENED AFTER...

YOU SHOULD REALLY STOP, IF YOU ARE ONLY LINGERING IN A SENTIMENTAL MOOD.

THIS MAN AND I ARE NOT THE SAME.

THE TIME MARKED IN HIS BODY IS DIFFERENT FROM MINE.

EVEN IF OUR MEMORIES ARE THE SAME,

BUT, THAT'S IT. THE REST IS TOO DIFFERENT.

INDEED. THE FACT THAT HE CAME HERE MEANS HIS MEMORY MIGHT BE THE SAME AS MINE FROM THAT TIME.

ARE ON ANOTHER LEVEL.

THE THINGS THAT HE CAN INFER FROM THE LENGTH OF THE MEMORY HE LOST,

THE WAY HE THINKS, HIS BEHAVIOR ...AND,

AND IT'S DIFFERENT FROM THE DANGER I MENTIONED BEFORE.

I CAN FEEL A SORT OF DANGER FROM HIM,

FOR HIM, IT SHOULD ALREADY BE QUITE STRANGE FOR YOU TO APPEAR HERE AT THIS POINT.

HE IS...

AND NOT ONLY THAT,

SOME-
THING
ELSE...

WHO

ARE
YOU?

MY NAME IS

...DON'T DO IT.

NO...

MADARA-ME... BAKU.

.....

SUCH... A COIN-CIDENCE...

SUCH A COINCIDENCE... IF MY SUSPICION IS CORRECT...

STARE

!

AND,

THAT BOOK ISN'T WHAT I NEED.

SHALL WE MEET TOGETHER?

YESTER-DAY_

THIS IS...

AND TODAY ...

THE SECOND TIME I HEAR THAT NAME.

!

VERY...

VERY...

RIGHT NOW, TO ME, YOUR EXISTENCE IS...

.....

AND, THE MYSTERIOUS GUY WHO BOUGHT IT REQUESTED IT "TO CONTINUE BEING A BOOKSTORE WITHOUT CHANGING ANYTHING". IT'S LIKE A MYSTERIOUS STORY AROUND HERE.

BUT, HE DIDN'T OPERATE THE STORE WELL, AND AFTER HE GOT A LARGE DEBT, THIS STORE WAS BOUGHT OUT

THE NEIGHBORS TOLD ME EVERYTHING AFTER I ASKED THEM. AFTER THE OWNER OF THIS BOOKSTORE DIED, HIS GRANDSON TOOK OVER IT.

HACHI-NA!!

!

WHAT'S WRONG? WHAT HAPPENED?

I'D LIKE TO MEET THAT "WEIRD RICH MAN" ONCE.

I SEE.

THERE REALLY ARE A LOT OF MYSTERIES IN THIS WORLD, HUH.

WITHOUT CHANGING ANYTHING, HUH... SO THAT'S WHY ONLY THIS BUILDING IS SO OLD COMPARED TO ITS SURROUNDINGS.

WHO IS HE? YOUR FRIEND?

WHAT HAPPENED, HACHINA? WHY ARE YOU SO EMOTIONAL? IT'S NOT LIKE YOU AT ALL!

UNTIL RIGHT NOW, I WAS THINKING THAT YOU BEING ALONE WOULD BE YOUR MISFORTUNE, BUT,

IT SEEMS THAT THE FACT THAT I WAS NOT ALONE WAS MY OWN MISFORTUNE.

DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT I AM SAYING?

YOU CAME HERE BY YOUR-SELF?

HE MIGHT STILL BE THINKING OF KILLING YOU, BAKU-SAN.

HE'S NOT EMOTIONAL AT ALL.

IT'S TOO LATE...

BUT,

HE'S THINKING AT AN ABNORMAL SPEED. . BE CAREFUL.

DON'T DROP YOUR GUARD... BAKU-SAN...

BAKU-S

I WAS SORT OF ABLE TO FEEL HIS HEART WAVERING BEFORE.

BUT NOW, I CAN'T READ HIM ANYMORE AT ALL!!

BECAUSE...

I AM... ALREADY...

I CAN'T HELP YOU ANYMORE...

WELL...

I FEEL SORRY FOR THAT DEALER THOUGH.

YOU HAVE AN INCREDIBLE MEMORY,

I COULD ALREADY TELL WHEN WE WERE AT THE BOOK STORE,

AND AN ASTOUNDING CAPABILITY TO PROCESS THOUGHTS...

YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO GET AWAY ANYMORE.

IF YOU KEEP HANGING AROUND ME LIKE THIS,

?

WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF THAT?

AND,

YOUR NAME IS HACHINA NAOKI, RIGHT? HA CHI NA NA O KI.

I WAS THINKING THAT YOU WERE LIKE A COMPUTER, ALWAYS ONE STEP FORWARD.

AH~

?

SO, WHAT WERE YOU SAYING BEFORE?

IT'S "2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY"?

DON'T TELL ME.

GOT IT?

HACHI 8

HACHINANA 87

NANA 7

IBM IS AN AMERICAN COMPANY, BUT, IN JAPAN, ITS EQUIVALENT WOULD BE NEC AND ITS PC-9800... **98** (KYU HACHI).

TAKING THOSE NUMBERS AND SHIFTING THEM AHEAD WOULD BE **87** (HACHI NANA)...

YES .. SO I THOUGHT, WELL, IT LOOKED QUITE THE SAME AS YOUR NAME... SO,

IT WAS CHOSEN BY SHIFTING AHEAD EACH LETTER OF THE 3-LETTER NAME OF THE LEADERS OF COMPUTERS AT THAT TIME, **IBM**, AS A MARK OF PROGRESS.

H ← I
A ← B
L ← M

THE NAME OF THE COMPUTER IN THAT MOVIE... THERE ARE RUMORS STATING THAT,

BY USING THIS THINKING, YOU ARE...

.....

HAL.
(HARU)

HOW'S THAT? YOU LIKE IT?

THAT IS TOO HARD TO UNDER-STAND.

THAT IS...

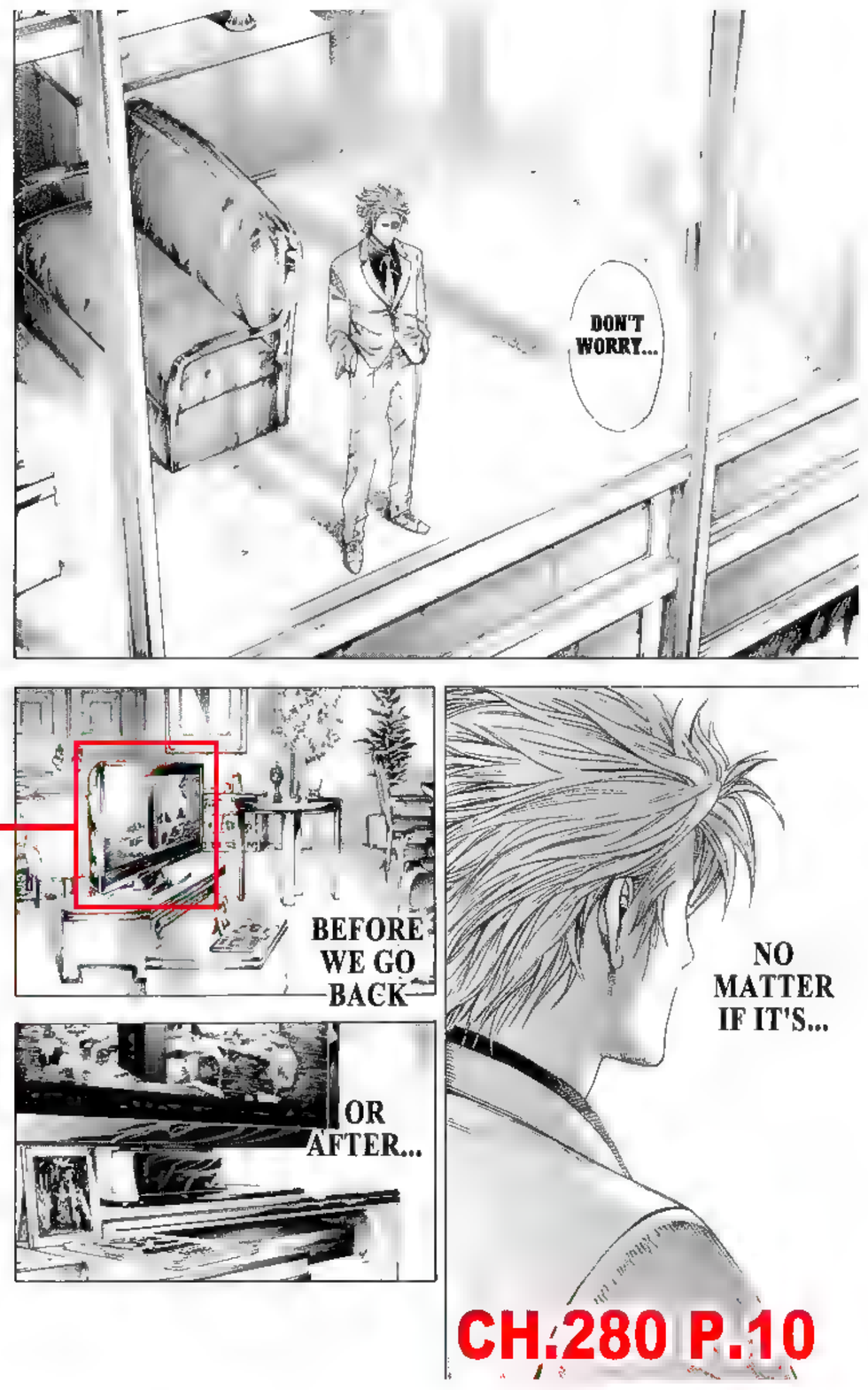
HAL NAME FORESHADOWING

THE FIRST TIME THE NAME "HAL" APPEARED WAS IN CHAPTER 90, "THE NAME OF THE COMPANION", PAGE 10.

(TL NOTE: THE TITLE OF THIS CHAPTER, "THIS NAME AGAIN" MIGHT NOT ONLY REFER TO THE SECOND TIME THAT SOUICHI HEARD BAKU'S NAME, BUT ALSO THE 2ND APPEARANCE OF THE NAME "HAL" IN THIS SERIES, PROBABLY?)

**INDEED, THE RAW WAS "ハル (HARU)",
BUT IT WAS ACTUALLY SUPPOSED TO BE "HAL".
BOTH "HAL" AND "HARU" PRONOUNCED AND WRITTEN THE SAME IN JAPANESE.
SINCE THERE'S NO "L" SOUND IN JAPANESE,
"L" IS MOST COMMONLY PRONOUNCED OR READ AS "RU".**

THE IMAGE SHOWING ON THE TV IN CHAPTER 280, PAGE 10, WAS A SCENE FROM THE MOVIE "2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY".



CHAPTER 317
THE DEVILISH MEMBER

I KILLED SOMEONE.

ON THAT DAY,

NOVEMBER 23RD, 1998.

I WONDER...

WHAT IT IS...

HUH?

.....

I THINK

AT THAT TIME...

HIS...

EYE...

HE MUST'VE BEEN REMEMBERING SOMETHING...

WHEN TELLING ME HIS MEMORIES.

YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO GET AWAY ANYMORE

IF YOU KEEP HANGING AROUND ME LIKE THIS,

!

WHAT EXACTLY

WON'T BE ABLE TO GET AWAY?

WAS HE TALKING ...

LOOKING AROUND

WHAT'S WRONG, USOGUI...? WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

I SEE.

IT'S NOTHING.

NO,

DID HE GIVE UP AND WENT HOME?

HAL?

...WELL, SINCE MY OPPONENT IS ALREADY WAITING.

THAT...

REFEREE KYARA!?

THAT IS... REFEREE ...

MADARAME BAKU...

HE IS...

A KAKEROU MEMBER!?

SHALL WE GO?

EVEN IF HE HAS THE SAME APPEARANCE FROM THEN UNTIL NOW,

:

HE NOW LOOKED LIKE SOMETHING TOTALLY DIFFERENT...

SO?

WANNA KEEP GOING?

THAT HE HIMSELF HAD SPRAYED THAT DENSE FOG OVER HIS OPPONENT?

OR WAS IT

WAS IT THAT HE COULD SEE THE DENSE FOG, COVERING THE OPPONENT'S BRAIN MAKING HIM UNABLE TO MAKE CALM DECISIONS PROPERLY?

OF COURSE.

THE REASON FOR THIS MAN'S BEHAVIOR NOT MATCHING THE AMOUNT OF MONEY LOST WAS DUE TO HIM BEING A PART OF THE FAMILY FROM A FAMILY OWNED BUSINESS.

THE MAN WHO WAS COMPLETELY ENCIRCLED BY THE FOG KEPT LOSING.

IN THIS SIMPLE GAME OF "BIG OR SMALL" WHERE PLAYERS ARE GIVEN ONE OF EACH CARD FROM 1-13, AND MUST WIN BY BEATING THE OPPONENT'S PLAYED CARD.

AND FINALLY, THE THING AS IF IT WAS HIS,

HAD BEEN DRAINED.

THE MONEY THAT HE'S BEEN UTILIZING THROUGH HIS POSITION AS IF IT WAS HIS,

THAT MAN'S OWN POCKET MONEY HAD BEEN QUICKLY DRAINED ALREADY. (IT'S EVEN DOUBTFUL IF THAT MONEY REALLY BELONGED TO HIM).

WANNA

KEEP GOING?

HIS POSITION AS THE COMPANY'S MAJOR SHARE-HOLDER,

SCATTERED WITH THE FOG TOO.

WHO DID NOT UNDERSTAND THE WEIGHT OF WHAT THAT MAN HAD JUST LET GO

EXCEPT THE MAN WHO GOT LOST IN HIS OWN GAMBLE.

LET'S END THIS SOON.

TSK... I'M NOT LUCKY TODAY.

THERE WAS NO ONE IN THAT ROOM WATCHING THIS GAMBLE.

WELL, I CAN UNDER-STAND WHY.

IT LOOKS LIKE THAT REFEREE OVER THERE IS LOOKING AT US WITH SUCH A SCARY FACE~

OH OH OH?

OH?

I CAN'T STAND YOUR DISGUSTING MANNERS ANYMORE.

TAKE OUT YOUR HAND-KERCHIEF, KYARA.

THIS IS ANOTHER MATTER.

AFTER ALL, YOU'VE BEEN SERVING THAT LITTLE PRINCE AS HIS EXCLUSIVE REFEREE FOR SO MANY YEARS, ENJOYING MANY DELICIOUS THINGS AND PLEASURES. AND ALL OF THAT IS ABOUT TO DISAPPEAR SUDDENLY~

LISTEN... THINK IT OVER AND LET GO OF THE HAND-KERCHIEF RIGHT NOW.

WHAT?

GOT IT?

YOU ARE A MAN WHO CAN LET THINGS GO...

OW

BUT I

AM A MAN WHO NEVER LETS GO, NEVER.

ISN'T THAT DIFFERENT FROM MINE.

A MAN WHOSE AGE

HAVING THE NUMBER ZERO BY HIS SIDE.

FINE,

YOU'RE A MAN WHO LIVES UP TO YOUR REPUTATION I'LL LET YOU GO THIS TIME.

HUMPH.

THOSE UNPRE-CEDENTED INDIVI-DUALS NAMED

REFEREES.

AND THE STRANGE SORT, WHO I HAVE BEEN LOOKING AT SINCE I REACHED THE AGE OF DISCRETION,

AH,

WAIT, REFEREE-SAN, YOUR HAND-KERCHIEF!!

AND DES-TROYING THIS WORLD'S

CONS-TANTLY DEVOUR-ING

BEING ONE OF THE 48 KAKEROU MEMBERS IN THE WORLD,

WEALTH AND OTHER MEMBERS.

OH, YOU HAD IT?

Y-YOU...

SORRY, SORRY.

MY MISTAKE ---

YOU DROPPED YOUR HANDKERCHIEF!! SEEMS LIKE YOU WANNA FIGHT AFTER ALL?

!

.....

キョロ

キョロ

WAI-

WAIT!!

EVEN THEY,

BUT

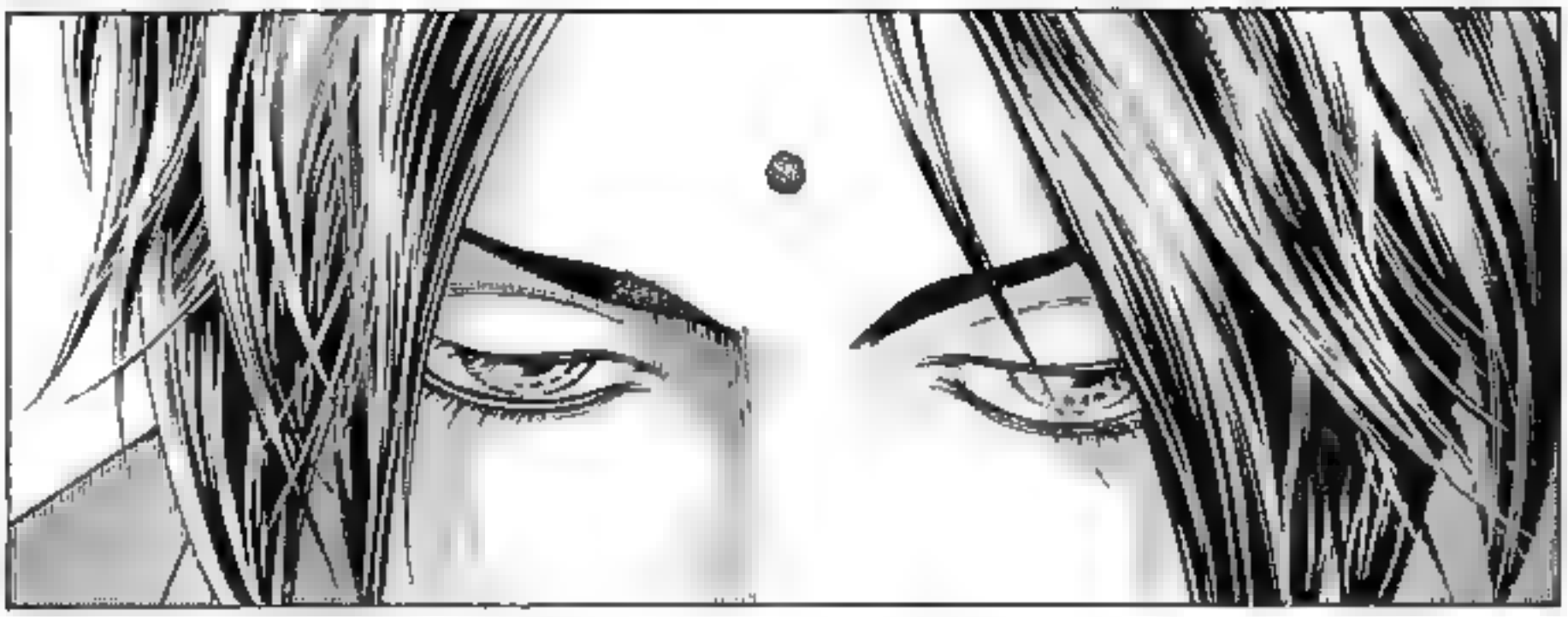
YOU'RE A BIG LIAR, AREN'T YOU?

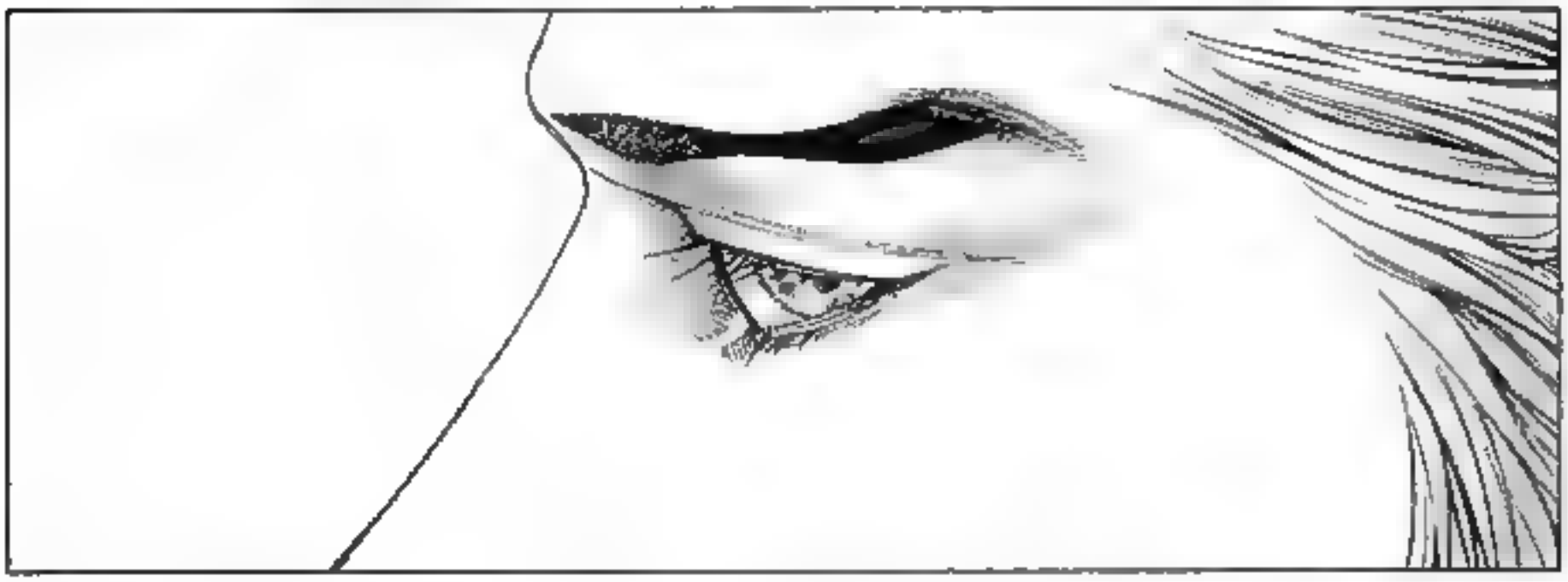
WERE DANCING IN THE PALM OF HIS HANDS.

IT WAS NO WONDER THAT I...

FELT ATTRAC-TED

TO HIS DEVILISH-NESS.





JUST A SIMPLE PRETEXT TO BE AROUND HIM.
BECOME
SINCE WHEN DID THE REASON FOR ME FOLLOWING HIM

THE TIME WHEN SOUICHI SAMA LOST HIS MEMORY WAS PROBABLY 4 DAYS AGO.

WE HAD PLANNED TO GO TO THE DORMITORY IN SWITZERLAND TOGETHER THAT DAY

I THINK SOUICHI-SAMA LOST HIS MEMORY AT THE AIRPORT

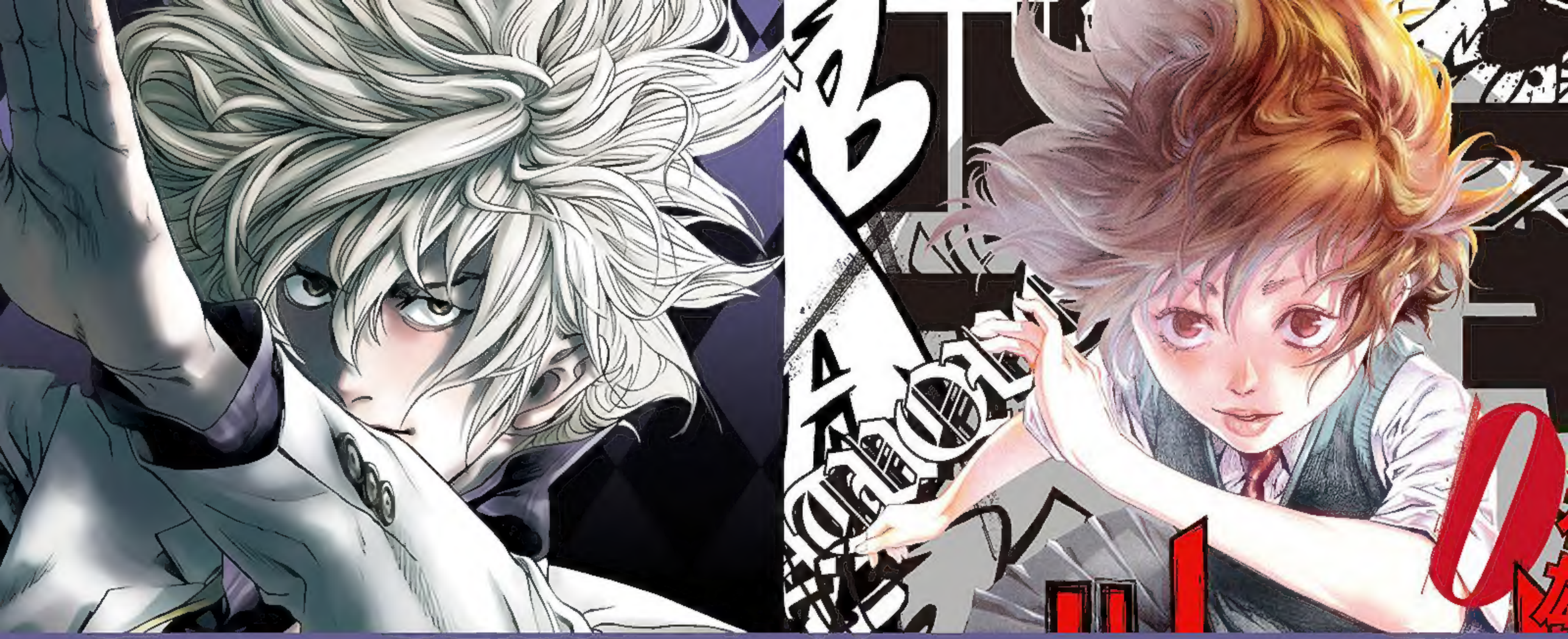
DATE OF RECORD-ING.

NOVEM-BER 20TH, 1998.

CLICK

IT WAS CERTAINLY LUCKY THAT WE WERE PLANNING FOR IT TO BE ONLY THE TWO OF US. NO ONE KNOWS ABOUT THIS YET.

嘘吸い 29完



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DEBT COLLECTOR YAKOU HIKOICHI

USOGUI SIDE STORY

I NEVER THOUGHT THAT I COULD EAT SOMETHING SO GOOD ON A DESERTED ISLAND!

YOU'RE AMAZING!

AMAZING!

HOW IS IT, YUUKO-CHAN?

I TOLD YOU NOT TO!

MOGAMI-SAN!

THE NEXT DAY

WHY DID YOU STILL GO CHALLENGE THE ISLAND'S KING!

IT MIGHT BE GOOD TO BE MARRIED TO YOU, MOGAMI-SAN♡

I'M MANLY AND CAN'T COOK AT ALL.

JUMP

OF COURSE!

WANT ANOTHER ONE?

CUT IT OUT~ I DIDN'T MEAN IT LIKE THAT~

YOU COULD'VE DIED FROM DOING THAT! DO YOU WANT TO LEAVE ME ALL ALONE!?

YOU IDIOT!

IT'S ALL FOR YOU, YUUKO-CHAN... I GOT THIS DELICIOUS MEAT FOR YOU...

YUU-

YUUKO-CHAN...

HOW IS IT? IS IT WARM?

...

!!

IT'S... SO COLD...

I KNOW!! AT A TIME LIKE THIS,

WE HAVE TO WARM EACH OTHER UP WITH OUR SKIN!

PANT

PANT

PANT

PANT

PANT

PANT

HUH!?

IT'S OKAY... IT'S OKAY, YUUKO-CHAN.

WHAT... WHAT IS THIS...

WAIT ...

AH...

WHAT... AH... AH...